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WOMEN WITH MONEY IN THREE NOVELS OF HENRY JAMES

by

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ABSTRACT

Failed potential is a recurrent theme in the works of Henry James. This thesis examines the theme of failure as it applies to rich young American women. The first chapter considers the early tales: "A Day of Days," "Poor Richard," "The Last of the Valerii," "Madame de Mauves," "Adina," "Longstaff's Marriage," "An International Episode" and "Daisy Miller." The second chapter is on The Portrait of a Lady. The third and fourth chapters are on, respectively, The Wings of the Dove and The Golden Bowl. There is a brief Introduction and Conclusion. The chapters on the novels also consider James's use of a controlling symbol. The works studied in this thesis are seen to form a development in the theme of failed potential and in the use of a controlling symbol.

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout his career, Henry James was interested in the relationship between money and marriage, particularly as it applies to rich, young women. Several of his early tales deal with this subject, as do three of his major novels: The Portrait of a Lady, The Wings of the Dove, and The Golden Bowl. In these works the relationship between money and marriage provides a basis for an examination of the theme of failed potential. This thesis will analyze the development of this theme beginning with James's early tales and culminating with The Golden Bowl. Stylistically, the treatment of the theme also changes. James uses symbolism much more in his later works and by The Golden Bowl uses a symbol to control the entire novel.

James uses money to free his central characters from a certain set of social problems while introducing them to a new set. Practical problems are eliminated, opening up the possibility of completely new problems. James is seldom interested in how a person survives physically; what he is concerned with is the emotional and moral life of a character. He gives his heroines many of the tools helpful to success and then watches most of them fail. In the early tales and the novels I will discuss, money is a crucial factor in the problems faced by James's heroines. The women are pursued not only because they are pleasant and attractive but because they are rich. Each woman must make a choice because of her financial situation, a choice which invariably concerns a husband or potential husband. Money initiates the problem, but the moral

make-up of each woman is at the centre of the problem. The personality and moral sense of the central character determine not only the choice made but the kinds of choices available.

All the Jamesian heroines must learn what their place in society is, as well as what their place is in a marriage. The failure to recognize the importance of society, no matter how restricted the society, causes failures in the romantic life also. The choice made concerning a marriage is also a choice regarding society. James often complicates the choice by making the American heroine confront a European society which is governed by rules different from those she is used to. When the heroine fails to understand or refuses to accept that the kind of marriage she makes determines her place in society, the potential for a happy and successful marriage is ruined.

The first chapter of this thesis will consider the following early tales of Henry James: "A Day of Days" (1866), "Poor Richard" (1867), "The Last of the Valerii" (1874), "Madame de Mauves" (1874), "Adina" (1874), "Longstaff's Marriage" (1878), "An International Episode" (1878) and "Daisy Miller" (1878). Many aspects of the early tales correspond to those of the novels. In the early tales, James explores briefly some of the ideas he examines carefully in the novels.

The second chapter will analyze the theme of failed potential in <u>The Portrait of a Lady</u>. Isabel Archer believes herself to be a free agent making an informed choice but, in fact, she does not know the complete situation and refuses to listen to those who warn her against marrying Osmond. Her determination to be free and independent in her choice of husband ultimately thwarts her freedom in life. Isabel is the best example of the Jamesian heroine who unwittingly ruins her chances

for a loving marriage. The reasons for Isabel's failure will be examined in detail.

Chapter Three will focus on The Wings of the Dove. Milly Theale's attempt at happiness is destroyed in two ways: one, her apparent friends are really plotting against her, and two, she is in bad health. Milly's money and her bad health are the reasons why Kate Croy and Merton Densher devise a plan around her. Unlike Isabel Archer, Milly is able to see the people around her for what they are and to realize that she is fundamentally different. Milly's awareness does not eliminate personal failure, but again, unlike Isabel, Milly has a positive effect on those around her.

Chapter Four will examine The Golden Bowl, particularly what makes Maggie Verver successful. One of the few successful heroines previous to Maggie is the Countess Valeri in "The Last of the Valerii." However, the Countess's marital problem, although similar to Maggie's, is farfetched and unrealistic. Maggie is the only fully realized heroine who attains some success. Maggie's success in her marriage is gained at the expense of her relationship with her father, but it is a choice that Maggie herself makes. The Golden Bowl is not necessarily optimistic but it differs from most of James's works on money and marriage in that a happy marriage is a possibility.

In the chapters on the novels some attention will be paid to the use of symbols. As James's concerns become more complex morally, his novels become more and more controlled by a symbol. In the early tales there are no controlling symbols. In The Portrait of a Lady the symbol of the portrait becomes the outline of the analysis of Isabel's personality. In The Wings of the Dove the symbol of the wings represents

the effect the dove (Milly) has on Merton and Kate. In The Golden Bowl the bowl as artifact and symbol controls everything that occurs. Not only did James develop his theme of failed potential; he also refined his method of expression.

My conclusion will draw together the observations made in chapters one to four to give a general description of the development of the theme of failed potential in Henry James. The importance of the change in the use of symbols will be related to the development of the theme.

CHAPTER ONE

THE EARLY TALES

The first of James's early works concerned with the marriage of a rich young woman is "A Day of Days." This tale introduces the reader of James to a particular type of woman: the rich independent young woman who is considering marriage or who has just been married. The description of Adela Moore, the main character, is important as it encapsulates many of the qualities James's important heroines usually have.

> Although by no means perfectly beautiful in person she was yet thoroughly pleasing, rejoicing in what young ladies are fond of calling an air; that is, she was tall and slender with a long neck, a low forehead and a handsome nose. Even after six years of the best company, too, she still had excellent manners. She was, moreover, mistress of a very pretty little fortune, and was accounted clever without detriment to her amiability and amiable without detriment to her wit.[1]

Adela's parents are dead and so she is free to decide how to live her life. Having travelled extensively and being a little tired of the world she accepts her brother Herbert's proposal that she come and keep house for him.

The plot of the story is simple: on the eve of his departure for Europe, Thomas Ludlow goes to visit Herbert Moore. Herbert is away for the day, but his sister Adela is at home. Adela and Thomas are attracted to each other from the moment they meet but Adela is not sure she will allow him to wait with her for Herbert. Adela is used to doing as she pleases and knows that the decision to ask Ludlow to wait is hers. After some internal debate she permits the visitor to wait.

> Adela stood debating within herself. After all, what if her companion should stay with her? It would, under the circumstances, be an adventure; but was an adventure necessarily a criminal thing? It lay wholely within herself to decide. She was her own mistress, and she had hitherto been a just mistress. (p. 150)

By the end of the afternoon Herbert still has not arrived but his absence has become unimportant. Ludlow comes close to missing his train while he and Adela discuss the possibility of his staying. The problem is that although each has become emotionally attached to the other, neither will make a firm commitment. Adela would like Ludlow to stay and he would like her to order him to stay; but neither will make any promise. Because there is nothing concrete to expect, Ludlow does make his train even though he knows Adela quite probably loves him.

> Ludlow had caught a glimpse of the truth--that truth of which the reader has had a glimpse--and he stood there at once thrilled and annoyed. He had both a heart and a conscience. "It's not my fault," he murmured to the latter; but he was unable to add, in all consistency, that it was his misfortune. It would be very heroic, very poetic, very chivalric, to lose his steamer and he felt he could do so for a sufficient cause--at the suggestion of a fact. But the motive here was less than a fact--an idea; less than an idea--a mere guess. (p. 184)

The potential for love, and perhaps marriage, between Ludlow and Adela exists but it never has a chance to be fulfilled. Because both Ludlow and Adela are reluctant to make any commitment they lose the possibility of a successful emotional relationship. Both are afraid to express their feelings and want the other to make the first step. Ludlow tells Adela, "'I will give you no answer that leaves you at an advantage. Ask me to stay--order me to stay, if that suits you better--and I will see how it sounds. Come, you must not trifle with a man'" (p. 183). Both Ludlow and Adela expect a sacrifice from the other without feeling able to reciprocate. Adela has even less at stake than Ludlow: he could

forfeit his trip and still not win her, while her life would remain unchanged.

In The Early Tales of Henry James, James Kraft writes:

> Like Isabel Archer in The Portrait of a Lady, although without Isabel's complexity, Adela is the American woman of quality and sensitivity with a tragic blind spot when it comes to seeing what will give her the life she wants. . . . In the end [Adela] retreats into the safe position for a correct lady, losing whatever freedom and life this "day of days" might have given her.[2]

Isabel enters into what appears to be a safe marriage and like Adela loses freedom. Parallels between the novel and the tale exist, but the novel is more complex and interesting because Isabel is more fully realized. Kraft comments:

> Adela is a too-simply-stated character, as James will know by the time he creates the more absorbing but similar Isabel Archer; the complexity in Isabel's character will be achieved then not alone in his better understanding of the American woman, but also in the contrast of her with the more various social scene of Europe.[3]

The heroines of the tales are prototypes for the heroines of the novels. In the tales James initiates his exploration into the failed potential of rich young women. In the novels he builds on the characters and problems he has been considering. Adela Moore is the first of James's rich young women to experience failed potential and "A Day of Days" is one of the few stories concerned with this theme that is set in America. Of the eight tales I will discuss in this chapter, six are set in Europe.

The second rich young woman who experiences failed potential is Gertrude Whittaker in "Poor Richard." This tale is the only other tale besides "A Day of Days" dealing with failed potential that is set in America. "Poor Richard" is, as the title signifies, the story of a young

man who not only lacks money but is, as the woman he loves says, "'so indolent, so irresolute, so undisciplined, so uneducated'"[4] that marriage between the two is quite unthinkable. Yet Richard goes ahead with his proposal because he loves Gertrude and needs her common sense. Richard's own common sense in realizing that he needs Gertrude upsets her. "There was something now so calmly resolute in his tone that Gertrude was sickened. She found herself weaker than he, while the happiness of both of them demanded that she be the stronger" (p. 195). Gertrude is adamant in her resolution not to marry Richard, a wise decision as Richard would be dependent on her for all things, material and emotional.

Gertrude finally falls in love with a man who is perhaps too strong.

> The truth is that the Captain was a great deal too proud. It was his fault that he could not bring himself to forget the difference between his poverty and Gertrude's wealth. He would of course have resented the insinuation that the superior fortune of the woman he loved could seem to him a reason for not declaring his love; but there is no doubt that in the case before us the sentiment in question didn't dare--or hadn't as yet dared--to lift its head. (pp. 206-7)

The Captain goes to war thinking that Gertrude loves Richard and dies before he learns the truth.

Another man present in the story, Major Luttrell, is a fortune hunter.

> The Major's present purpose was to possess himself of Miss Whittaker's confidence, hand and fortune. . . . A man of refined tastes, too, he had become sensible, as he approached middle age, of the many advantages of a well-appointed home. He had therefore decided that a wealthy marriage would spread the carpet of repose. A girl of rather a fainter outline than Gertrude would have been the woman--we cannot say of his heart; but, as he argued, beggars can't be choosers. (p. 236)

Luttrell manges to engage himself to Gertrude while causing separations

between Gertrude, Richard and Captain Severn. Near the end of the tale Gertrude learns that Luttrell and Richard have deceived her, Luttrell because he wanted her money, Richard because he wanted her love. She breaks the engagement and is able to go to Europe because of her wealth.

> Her great wealth, of which she was wont to complain that it excluded her from human sympathy, now affords her a most efficient protection. She passes among her fellow country-men abroad for a very independent, but a very contented woman; although as she is by this time nearly thirty years of age some little romantic episode in the past is vaguely alluded to as accounting for her continued celibacy. (p. 258)

Because of her money Gertrude falls prey to the fortune hunter but her money also affords her protection against further advances. Money gives Gertrude a very comfortable material life but seems to exclude her from a normal emotional life. This problem recurs in James's novels and tales. James does not find a fortune necessarily baleful but often the fortune becomes a threat because of the innocence, rather than the malice, of the holder. This idea is dealt with in detail in The Portrait of a Lady and The Golden Bowl.

The Golden Bowl also picks up many of the ideas in "The Last of the Valerii," another early tale about a young wealthy American woman. In this tale, the woman marries an attractive, but poor, Italian Count. The marriage causes her god-father some consternation.

> She seemed to me in her blond prettiness, so tender, so appealing, so bewitching, that it was impossible to believe that he had not more thought for all this than for the pretty fortune which it yet bothered me to believe that he must, like a good Italian, have taken the exact measure of.[5]

But the marriage appears to be a happy one, he later reports, "a childlike interchange of caresses, as candid and unmeasured as those of a shepherd and a shepherdess in a bucolic poem" (p. 94).

The young countess loves her husband and is also charmed by his past and ancestry. With her money she is able to begin restoration on the family villa, a restoration coupled with a great respect for the past. She is shocked one day to find the workmen scraping the moss off a sarcophagus because, as her god-father points out, "after that slow-coming, slow-going smile of her lover, it was the rusty complexion of his patrimonial marbles that she most prized" (p. 91). Ironically it is the patrimonial marbles that nearly disintegrate the marriage. The excavators unearth an ancient statue of Juno which the Count begins to adore in pagan fashion. That the statue is a Juno is significant. The Count has been forthright in his declarations that he is not much of a Catholic and that, in fact, he is quite superstitious. His marriage to an American with no past may have prompted him to think about his own ancestry. It is ironic that the Countess's money makes possible the excavation of an ancient statue which nearly ruins the marriage.

The Countess realizes the only solution, if there is any at all, is to return the statue to the earth. She tells her god-father:

> "She must go back--she must go back! We must smother her beauty in the dreadful earth. It makes me feel almost as if she were alive; but it came to me last night with overwhelming force, when my husband came in and refused to see me, that he'll not be himself as long as she is above ground. To cut the knot we must bury her!" (p. 120)

The Juno is returned to the earth and the Countess awaits her husband's reaction. Again the god-father reports the action:

> His eyes were brilliant, but not angry. He had missed the Juno and had drawn a long breath! The Countess kept her eyes fixed on her work, and drew her silken stitches like an image of wifely contentment. The image seemed to fascinate him: he came in slowly, almost on tiptoe, walked to the chimney-piece and stood there in a sort of rapt contemplation. (p. 121)

Rescuing one's husband from the clutches of a statue is an unusual solution to an unusual marital problem, but the Countess manages to do what is necessary and is rewarded by the return of her husband's love and attention. Later, in The Golden Bowl, James writes a novel in which a young American woman must save her marriage. Her husband, an Italian Prince, is having an affair. Winning a husband back from a woman is much more realistic than winning him back from a statue. The mystical elements of "The Last of the Valerii" are replaced by complex emotions in The Golden Bowl.

Strength in a woman is exhibited in "Madame de Mauves," a tale about a wealthy young American girl named Euphemia who marries a poor European. In this case the man is a French Baron who has an inflated opinion of his family name, yet manages because of what is at stake to cover up his disgust at Euphemia's mother's opposition to the marriage.

> M. de Mauves had been irritated and mortified by Mrs. Cleve's opposition, and hardly knew how to handle an adversary who failed to perceive that a De Mauves of necessity gave more than he received. But he had obtained information on his return to Paris which exalted the uses of humility. Euphemia's fortune, wonderful to say, was greater than its fame, and in view of such a prize, even a De Mauves could afford to take a snubbing.[6]

The marriage takes place and Euphemia quickly learns that her husband is a frivolous person. Years of unhappiness follow, at which point Longmore, a fellow American, meets Mme. de Mauves and is intrigued by her. Intrigue turns to love and there is a suggestion that some feeling is returned to Longmore. However, Mme. de Mauves will not allow herself to betray her conscience, even though her husband does not seem to care. She asks Longmore to leave her of his own volition and he, also being an honourable creature, understands.

> She was giving him a chance to do gallantly what it seemed unworthy of both of them, that he should do meanly. She liked him, she must have liked him greatly, to wish so to spare him, to go to the trouble of conceiving an ideal of conduct for him. (p. 194)[7]

Two years after Longmore returns to America, he learns what has happened in the de Mauves family.

> Mr. de Mauves had fait quelques folies, which his wife had taken absurdly to heart. He had repented and asked her forgiveness, which she had inexorably refused. She was very pretty, and severity, apparently, suited her style; for whether or no her husband had been in love with her before, he fell madly in love with her now. He was the proudest man in France, but he had begged her on his knees to be readmitted to favor. (pp. 208-9)[8]

He kills himself. His wife's actions are the result of being hurt and of conscience. Losing her innocence and love causes Mme. de Mauves to turn to herself. Like the standard of conduct she sets for Longmore, the one set for herself is difficult. Happiness has been lost, so the course of action is to behave honorably. If Mme. de Mauves had accepted her husband, her life might have been superficially happy but the facade would have cracked before long. Her conscience is too strong and inflexible, and settling for second best after the first innocent love has been lost is impossible. Mme. de Mauves' honesty and conscience are reworked later in The Portrait of a Lady, another story of innocence lost.

Isabel's conscience and honesty are much more realistic than Mme. de Mauves', although the basis for each woman's attitude is a kind of romanticism. Of Mme. de Mauves, James Kraft says:

> Certainly no matter how immoral [her husband] was, her refusal to accept his repentance shows a hardness of spirit that demands examination. One can only pity a woman whose concept of life is so fantastic--so romantically perfect--as to deny reality and kill life.[9]

In The Portrait of a Lady, James examines a woman who has a romantic view of life but who comes to see and accept reality rather than denying it. Isabel gains the reader's pity because she is so human. It is difficult to view Mme. de Mauves in the same way.

There are many stories about young Americans swept away by Europeans and in many of these the woman, once captivated and taken out of her usual surroundings, becomes a much stronger person. The loss of innocence is handled in many different ways, but in all cases innocence is seen less in sexual than in moral terms. Of the stories mentioned so far, all are concerned with moral awakening. A jolt of some kind is delivered as in for example "Poor Richard" when Gertrude learns that Luttrell and Richard kept Severn from her or in "Mme. de Mauves" when Euphemia discovers her husband is having an affair. The moral sense can also be outraged by blows to someone else, as in "Adina".

This story centres around a topaz, found by a young Italian and sold by him to an American. The Italian, Angelo Beati, is unaware of its value, while the American suspects. Once it is established the topaz is extremely valuable Angelo Beati demands restitution. The relationship between money and morality is very strong in this tale. Scrope, the American, is clearly in the wrong as he has tricked an innocent into giving up something of value. Even while the negotiations are taking place, the question of Scrope's morals arises. Angelo looks "at Scrope with a dumb appeal to his fairness"[10] and when the deal is completed he answers Scrope's question, "'Are you satisfied,'" with another question: "'Have you a good conscience?'" (p. 219).

Scrope tries to justify his actions to his friend by saying: "'I get my prize; the ingenious Angelo gets a month's carouse,--he'll

enjoy it,--and goes to sleep again. Pleasant dreams to him! What does he want of money? Money would have corrupted him!'" (p. 220). The loss of a possible fortune certainly does affect Angelo and when Scrope refuses to pay restitution, Angelo vows revenge. Angelo gains an unwitting accomplice to his revenge, Scrope's fiancée Adina. Somehow Angelo makes contact with Adina; a few days later she breaks her engagement and runs away as Angelo's wife. Angelo, having lost a material fortune, takes his revenge by marrying Scrope's fiancée.

Angelo and Adina do appear to be happy and she, at least, is in love with him. The narrator comments: "That [Angelo] was in love I don't pretend to say; but I think he had already forgotten how his happiness had come to him, and that he was basking in a sort of primitive natural, sensuous delight in being adored" (p. 255). Adina has some money of her own, more than Angelo could ever have hoped to have. However Angelo does not marry her for her money; instead he marries her because she is another kind of fortune. She is an attractive young lady and the fiancée of the man who wronged him. Although Adina's money is not the key factor in the problem, it does, as all fortunes do, place the heroine in a particular set of circumstances. The narrator notes that Adina's money has probably not been ignored by Angelo's uncle, the padre who married the young couple. When the narrator goes to see the Padre, he is told "'Remember . . . that she is of age, and her own mistress, and can do what she likes with her money;--she has a good deal of it, eh?'" (p. 254). Fortunately Angelo realizes that not only has he his revenge on Scrope, but he really does have something more valuable than a priceless gem. He tells the narrator: "'She's better than the topaz!'" (p. 256). Too late, Scrope learns the real value of his topaz and his

reaction is to throw it in the Tiber.

In "Adina" James seems to be trying to work out in yet another way the connection between marriage and morality. Adina becomes less enchanted with her fiancé the more she discovers his immoral action. Two problems with this story are that Adina is very slightly sketched and that it is difficult to see just how Angelo managed to convince her to marry him. The story has structural faults which take away from its thematic effect.

Another story which has a strange plot is "Longstaff's Marriage." Like many of the tales, this one is unrealistic. The central character is Diana Belfield, a rich young American travelling in Europe with her friend Agatha. Diana finds herself besieged by men but stays resolute against marriage.

> She was passionately single, fiercely virginal; and in the straight-glancing grey eye which provoked men to admire, there was a certain silvery ray which forbade them to hope. . . . Thanks to this defensive eyebeam, the dangerous side of our heroine's enterprise was slow to define itself; thanks, too, to the exquisite propriety of her companion. . . . Money, too, is a protection, and Diana had money enough to purchase privacy.[11]

Longstaff, an affluent English gentleman, falls in love with Diana and on what appears to be his death bed proposes to her. She refuses; the women resume their travels; Longstaff's fate is unknown. After a few years including some time spent in America, Diana is ill and unhappy and so decides to return to Europe with Agatha. The women meet Longstaff and Agatha realizes that Diana is in love with him.

Diana has a very romanticized view of love. She believes that Longstaff has recovered because she refused to marry him. She also believes that in recovering from his illness Longstaff overcomes his love for her. This thought dismays Diana as she now loves him.

> It was needless that Diana should confess that his image had never been out of her mind, that she believed he was still among the living, and that she had come back to Europe with a desperate hope of meeting him. . . . She knew her love was very strange; she could only say it had consumed her. It had all come upon her afterwards--in retrospect, in meditation. Or rather, she supposed, it had been there always, since she first saw him, and the revulsion from displeasure to pity, after she left his bedside, had brought it out. And with it came the faith that he had indeed got well, both of his malady and of his own passion. This was her punishment! (p. 237)

An illness takes hold of Diana and she begins to die. Agatha searches out Longstaff and Diana makes the same request of him that he made of her two years previous. The two are married; Diana dies a few days later, seeing Longstaff once briefly after the ceremony. The last words of the story are Agatha's, explaining the situation to Longstaff: "'She loved you,' said Agatha, 'more than she believed you could now love her; and it seemed to her that, when she had had her moment of happiness to leave you at liberty was the tenderest way she could show it!'" (p. 242). Perversely Diana believes that she must die in order to prove her great love for Longstaff. Because he survived after she refused him she thinks he no longer loves her. In order to show that this is not the case with her, Diana dies.

Philip Sicker comments on the story:

> Although the painfully symmetrical structure of the story hints at a psychological symbiosis between the lovers, each is entirely trapped within the realm of his own mind. As James reveals over and over again in these tales, it is the private consciousness that brings about its own extinction just as it creates the images it adores.[12]

Diana creates an image of love which necessitates that the lover die for the sake of the love. Obviously love then becomes a means to death, not life. Diana's love for Longstaff is perverse because she does not see him as he is but rather as she imagines he should be. The creation of

the image distorts reality, perverts love and ultimately makes love impossible. Potential can never be realized under such circumstances. This failure of a character to see a loved one as he is, rather than as she imagines him to be is a theme that is used later in The Portrait of a Lady. The creation of an image which perverts love takes place in The Wings of the Dove. Merton Densher's love for the dead Milly can be seen as perverse because Densher ceases to think of Milly as a person. He sees her as an ideal, an image.

In "An International Episode" wealthy American innocence meets wealthy English aristocracy. Fortunately love is not at stake, but marriage is. Bessie Alden is courted by Lord Lambeth, and although he does not need her money it does make her attractive. Bessie is part of the American upper class because she is rich and so Lord Lambeth has the chance of meeting her. The differences between the American and the Englishman are indicated pointedly. Mrs Westgate, Bessie's sister, tells Lord Lambeth,

> "You must take us as we come--with all our imperfections on our heads. Of course we haven't your country life, and your old ruins, and your great estates, and your leisure class, and all that. . . . Of course there are differences; otherwise what did one come abroad for?"[13]

The differences are also ideological. The conversation Bessie has with Lord Lambeth regarding his father's seat in the House of Lords shows how different the two are.

> "Lord Lambeth," said Bessie Alden, "are you an hereditary legislator?"
> "Oh, I say," cried Lord Lambeth, "don't make me call myself such names as that."
> "But you are a member of Parliament," said the young girl.
> "I don't like the sound of that either."
> "Doesn't your father sit in the House of Lords?" Bessie Alden went on.

"Very seldom," said Lord Lambeth.
"Is it an important position?" she asked.
"Oh dear no," said Lord Lambeth.
"I should think it would be very grand," said Bessie Alden, "to possess simply by an accident of birth the right to make laws for a great nation."
"Ah but one doesn't make laws. It's a great humbug." (p. 281)[14]

Although interested in Lord Lambeth, Bessie does not really appear to be in love with him. He, on the other hand, professes love but actually seems to be captivated by the fact that Bessie is not chasing him. He tells his friend, Percy, that he likes Bessie's spirit, that "'[s]he's not afraid, and she says things out, and she thinks herself as good as anyone. She is the only girl I have ever seen that was not dying to marry me'" (p. 319).[15] Bessie realizes after a visit from Lambeth's mother and sister that she had been scrutinized as if she were an object: "Bessie was silent awhile, but in a few moments she observed that she had a very good theory. 'They came to look at me,' she said, as if this had been a very ingenious hypotheses" (p. 326).[16] Bessie's sister has been trying to tell her this very fact, but Bessie must discover it for herself. The next day Lord Lambeth proposes to Bessie and she refuses him. The American women leave London immediately and go to Paris. Mrs. Westgate is worried about her image; that is, she is afraid the world will think Bessie has been scared away. Her sister's reaction is different: "Bessie Alden seemed to regret nothing" (p. 327).[17]

The final tale for consideration is "Daisy Miller." This is a well known story; a young American girl, travelling in Europe, refuses to comply with certain standards of behavior. Her actions lead to speculation about her reputation, then condemnation of it, and finally her insistence on a late night visit to the Colosseum brings on illness

and death. Daisy resembles other Jamesian heroines in her independence, which, as with other heroines, is a major contributing factor to the central conflict. Both Miller children do what they like; Ralph's freedom is an inconvenience and an irritation, but Daisy's freedom has much larger ramifications. Tension is created by the discrepancy between what others think Daisy should do and what she actually does. The focus of the story is ostensibly on Daisy, but as the story unfolds, the real focus is seen to be the shifting opinions of those around her, most notably those of Winterbourne. Another dimension is added when the reader's shifting opinion is considered. John H. Randall says: "Since Henry James has presented Daisy purely from the outside, leaving us to draw what conclusions our temperaments and training incline us to, it strikes me that he has given us a double-jointed story which admits of more than one interpretation of the characters, depending as I have said, on our own view of life."[18] Daisy's freedom and actions are judged by those around her including Eugenio, Winterbourne, Mrs. Walker, and Mrs. Costello and also by the reader who has the added responsibility of considering his own reaction to Daisy in regard to other reactions.

The amount of freedom Daisy exhibits calls her reputation into question. In one way the story can be seen as the unfolding of Daisy to Winterbourne, or Winterbourne's search for the answer to the puzzle. Winterbourne is fascinated by the fact that Daisy is a puzzle and also irritated by this fact. One of Winterbourne's first observations on Daisy is that her "glance was perfectly direct and unshrinking. It was not, however, what would have been called an immodest glance, for the young girl's eyes were singularly honest and fresh" (p. 147).[19] That Winterbourne likes Daisy is clear. "Poor Winterbourne was amused,

perplexed, and decidedly charmed" (p. 150).[20] Yet Winterbourne's perplexity derives from his inability to pigeon-hole Daisy, to categorize her. He questions his ability to appreciate or discern acceptable behavior in young American girls.

> He had never yet heard a young girl express herself in just this fashion, never, at least, save in cases where to say such things seemed a kind of demonstrative evidence of a certain laxity of deportment. And yet was he to accuse Miss Daisy Miller of actual or potential inconduite, as they said at Geneva? He felt he had lived at Geneva so long that he had lost a good deal; he had become dishabituated to the American tone. (pp. 150-151)[21]

Daisy is not conscious of what she says. Apparently her talk is, as Winterbourne later remarks, "the most charming garrulity he had ever heard" (p. 168).[22] Winterbourne is relieved to come to some kind of conclusion about Daisy. "She was only a pretty American flirt. Winterbourne was almost grateful for having found the formula that applied to Miss Daisy Miller" (p. 151). This formula does not fit and Winterbourne has constantly to adjust his conception of Daisy. He learns that she can be hurt, first by his aunt's refusal to meet her, second by the attitude Mrs. Walker adopts, and third by Winterbourne himself. Each incident is described briefly but it is clear that however frivolous Daisy may be she is still capable of feeling pain. After learning of Mrs. Costello's confining headaches, Daisy realizes she is being snubbed.

> "She doesn't want to know me!" she said, suddenly. "Why don't you say so? You needn't be afraid, I'm not afraid!" And she gave a little laugh. Winterbourne fancied there was a tremor in her voice; he was touched, shocked, mortified by it. (p. 159)[23]

Daisy has been wounded and she has the pride to try to show unconcern. Winterbourne's reaction is to assess the depth of her pain to see whether

he can comfort her.

> Winterbourne wondered whether she was seriously wounded, and for a moment almost wished that her sense of injury might be such as to make it becoming in him to attempt to reassure and comfort her. He had a pleasant sense that she would be very approachable for consolatory purposes. (p. 160)[24]

Winterbourne is being quite selfish at this point. His main reason for wanting to comfort Daisy is his own pleasure. Much of Winterbourne's interest in Daisy exists only insofar as Daisy amuses him. Even in this Winterbourne does not want to be amused too much--he is slightly exasperated by the shifts he has to make in his idea of what Daisy is. When Winterbourne stumbles on Daisy and Mr. Giovanelli in the Colosseum at night he is relieved because his fluctuating idea of Daisy is solidified. He believes he does not have to wonder about her anymore.

> Winterbourne stopped, with a sort of horror; and, it must be added, with a sort of relief. It was as if a sudden illumination had been flashed upon the ambiguity of Daisy's behavior and the riddle had become easy to read. She was a young lady whom a gentleman need no longer be at pains to respect. . . . He felt angry with himself that he had bothered so much about the right way of regarding Miss Daisy Miller. (p. 202)[25]

Only after Daisy is lost to him forever does Winterbourne begin to realize what she really was. He, like all the others, has mistaken an innocent and naive girl for something quite immoral. The sensitive reader can see in the original text Daisy's innocence. William Dean Howells, a friend and critic of James, speaks of Daisy's "flowerlike purity"[26] long before the New York edition was published.

That James meant Daisy to be innocent is quite clear when his revisions are examined. About the revision Viola Dunbar comments: "Most of the changes that he introduced that have more than a purely stylistic

purpose emphasize Daisy's charm, the disagreeableness of her critics, and the innocence of her conduct."[27] Dunbar cites such changes as James's heightening of Daisy's attractiveness, his use of nature imagery to describe her, and his reinforcement of the unattractiveness of those around her. Examples are changing "Miss Miller" to "the charming creature," changing "that pretty American girl" to "that little American who's so much more a work of nature than of art," and changing "the mother" to "the skinny little mother." The use of nature imagery more strongly suggests Daisy's innocence. Winterbourne's recognition of Daisy's voice is changed from "these were the words he heard, in the familiar accent of Miss Daisy Miller" to "these words were winged with then accent, so that they fluttered and settled about him in the darkness like vague white doves." James uses the symbol of the dove for his most innocent creation, Milly Theale. The purity of the dove is ascribed to Daisy by Winterbourne, but it is James's revision that emphasizes her innocence. The entire short story is constructed of observation: everyone observes Daisy and judges her. Daisy's mind is never shown from the inside but the reader learns all that is necessary by what is reported about her. What can be seen, aside from all remarks and conduct is a young lady in love with a man too obtuse to realize it.

Daisy's cry "'I don't care . . . whether I have Roman fever or not'" (p. 204) may be attributed to her willfulness, but more likely it is the cry of a woman who has just realized that the man she cares for believes terrible things about her. The exchange between the two immediately preceding this comment is important.

> "Did <u>you</u> believe I was engaged the other day?" she asked.
> "It doesn't matter what I believed the other day," said Winterbourne, still laughing.

> "Well, what do you believe now?"
> "I believe that it makes very little difference whether you are engaged or not!"
> He felt the young girl's pretty eyes fixed upon him through the thick gloom of the archway; she was apparently going to answer. (pp. 203-204)[28]

Daisy has been trying quite desperately throughout the story to get Winterbourne to notice her. Instead he examines her as a curio, a puzzle to be figured, not a woman to share feelings with. Daisy still attempts from her death-bed to touch Winterbourne emotionally by sending him the message that she was never engaged. Her wondering if he remembered the trip to the castle in Switzerland is further indication that Winterbourne had occupied much of her thoughts. The trip to the castle is notable as during it, Daisy exhibits quite a show of jealousy when she learns Winterbourne must leave for Geneva. Daisy's request that Winterbourne come to Rome not for his aunt but to see Daisy is yet another indication of the depth of her feeling for him. Unfortunately Winterbourne sees only the flirt; he does not consider that Daisy might have real feelings. Also Winterbourne's excessive concern for the superficial and his inability to accept a different code of behavior set up a large barrier between him and Daisy.

After her death, Mr. Giovanelli confides in Winterbourne, a confidence unexpected in a variety of ways but which is necessary so that Winterbourne can see the true measure of his folly. The exchange between the men, the two points of a triangle with Daisy, exposes Winterbourne's stupidity to himself. Giovanelli says:

> "She was the most beautiful young lady I ever saw, and the most amiable." And then he added in a moment, "And she was the most innocent."
> Winterbourne looked at him and presently repeated his words, "And the most innocent?"

"The most innocent!"
Winterbourne felt sore and angry. (pp. 205-206)[29]

Giovanelli is acting in a most honourable fashion at this point. He probably realizes the feelings Daisy had for Winterbourne and also saw how they were returned. He has nothing to gain or lose by speaking frankly to Winterbourne but he does, in a sense, vindicate a woman he knew he could never attain, and yet still admired and cared for. Daisy's wealth initially attracts Giovanelli but even after he realizes he will never be able to marry her, he remains to escort her around Rome. Although he does the wrong thing by taking her to the Colosseum, he cannot be blamed for her death as it was her decision to go.

"Daisy Miller" caused a great critical debate when it first appeared in the Cornhill magazine in 1878. Since then critics have still been divided on the subject of Daisy. For example William Wasserstrom says "Clearly, she isn't immoral--she is ignorant; she's not simply innocent--she is infantile and she childishly throws away her life."[30] It is difficult to imagine Daisy throwing away her life--even when Winterbourne apparently abandons her before the Colosseum episode she looks to other entertainments. Her willfulness in seeing the Colosseum at night is only that--not an example of infantile behavior--and is coupled with a youthful disbelief in death. Her life is taken away, physically by the fever, but more importantly it is shattered emotionally by Winterbourne's lack of positive response. Peter Buitenhuis elevates Daisy above Wasserstrom's idea of her but still refuses to give her any intelligence: "Daisy is a pathetic figure, for she dies innocent and wronged, but she can hardly arouse deep feelings of sympathy since she has very little comprehension of the causes of her fate."[31] The lack of

comprehension appears to occur on the part of those around her. Daisy's honesty and openness are misunderstood by those who consider manners more important than morals. One of the most astute readers of "Daisy Miller" was also one of the earliest. Howells comments:

> In proportion to the offence she gives by her lawless innocence the things she does are slight things, but their consequences break her heart, and leave the reader's aching, as Winterbourne's must have ached life-long.[32]

James, however, was not just pulling heart strings. Some critics as mentioned have seen "Daisy Miller" as a condemnation of the flirtatious young woman: Daisy gets what she deserves because she is too stupid to deserve anything else. Other critics take the opposite view and like William Wasserstrom, who says "In James's mind, the irony of Daisy's behavior is her refusal to accept a code of manners worse than her own: this decision expresses her American courage to reject the opinions of nasty minds,"[33] they see the tale as an indictment of European manners and morals. In John Randall's article "The Genteel Reader and Daisy Miller," an extremely perceptive piece, Randall says that the story

> is about the shameful waste which can result, not only from snobbery, but from sheer ineffectuality and blindness, as James ticks off first the snobs, Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walker, then Mr. Giovanelli, who is kind but ineffectual, then Winterbourne who is neither effectual nor kind![34]

Notably Daisy's mother is left off the list; for although appearing ineffective, Mrs. Miller does redeem herself, in Winterbourne's eyes, at least, by being "a most efficient and judicious nurse" (p. 205).[35] Like the heroines before her, Daisy loves independence and has the means to indulge her fancy. Unlike her predecessors, Daisy has little or no idea

how to act independently without offending or outraging others' sense of propriety. Daisy is termed immoral by those who consider an irreverent attitude toward manners as the worst guideline to public behavior. James, of course, is well aware of the power and importance of manners, but in this story he is not lamenting manners nor immoral conduct but the inability of a group of people to understand a person in their midst, and that person's inability to comprehend that she really is being condemned, not only by those she does not care about but by the man she loves. James Kraft says:

> The "Roman fever" she catches is worldly evil, which is pervasive, whether she knows it or not. Her inability to see what does exist and to deal responsively with it makes her a victim of this evil--innocent but no less at fault. She is not destroyed by this evil alone, but also by the indifference of Winterbourne.[36]

The idea of being "innocent but no less at fault" is explored in greater depth in The Portrait of a Lady. Isabel, unlike Daisy, comes to realize her mistakes.

"Daisy Miller" is a story of "shameful waste"[37] as Randall says, waste on all sides as each person in the story has something to offer, but through misunderstanding everyone comes off looking bad except Daisy who turns out looking foolish. The sense of loss and failure is repeated and elaborated in The Portrait of a Lady and in The Wings of the Dove. James's heroines in the novels become more sympathetic and more human than those of the tales. Isabel, Milly and Maggie have great potential. In The Portrait of a Lady and The Wings of the Dove the potential is unrealized or thwarted. The reasons for the failure are complex: some are internal; some are external. Not until Maggie Verver does James have a fully realized heroine who reconciles inner and outer problems.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY

The Portrait of a Lady is James's first novel to study the theme of failed potential as it relates to the relationship between money and the marriage of a rich young American woman. Many of the concerns of the early tales are brought together and examined in depth in this novel. Isabel Archer, the main character, has several of the characteristics of earlier Jamesian heroines and has to face many of the same problems. Although there are basic similarities to previous works, The Portrait of a Lady is more complex stylistically and morally. The increased moral complexity results from the fact that Isabel is the most fully realized Jamesian heroine compared to predecessors; the increased stylistic complexity results from James's growing use of a controlling symbol.

This chapter will examine, first, the similarities between Isabel and previous Jamesian heroines. Then Isabel's potential for success and the reasons for her failure will form the major part of the chapter. The chapter will also consider James's use of the portrait as a controlling symbol and its relation to the theme of failed potential.

One possible problem in an analysis of The Portrait of a Lady is the question of which text to use. There are several editions of the novel. The first appearance of the book was in serial form in Macmillan's Magazine, October 1880 - November 1881 and in the Atlantic Monthly, November 1880 - December 1881. The first edition was published by Macmillan's and Houghton, Mifflin and Company in 1881. Robert D. Bamberg

notes that James revised his work between the periodical publications and the first edition but that "[b]esides an occasional change of name (from "Geraldine" to "Serena" Merle) or place (a winter spent by Ralph Touchett at Algiers rather than Corfu), the periodical versions are fundamentally similar to the First Edition."[1] There was a collected edition in 1883 which contained The Portrait of a Lady. In 1907-9, Charles Scribner's published the New York Edition which contained works chosen by James. He revised all the works selected for this edition and because of the lapse in time between the first edition and the New York edition of The Portrait of a Lady, the revisions are extensive. The New York edition is commonly used for critical studies. I do not wish to depart from this practice.

Critics are not in accord over the effect of the revision. F. O. Matthiessen and R. P. Blackmur see the revision as clarifying the intentions of the earlier work.[2] Anthony J. Mazzella and Nina Baym believe that the revision significantly changes the earlier version, although they do not agree on the effect. Mazzella believes that the characters, especially Isabel, are changed. He says of the two Isabels:

> They are disunited by the degree of freedom and vulnerability possessed by the later Isabel who, in addition, tends to view her vulnerability more clearly as an adjunct of marriage but who is only dimly aware--unlike the first Isabel who is not aware at all--that the basis of her anxiety is a fear that the freedom constituted by the clear conduct of her consciousness may be annihilated by sexual possession . . . . Because she exists on a compelling level of mind, the late Isabel does what she does. But her distant predecessor does what she does for reasons perhaps best ascribed to the folly of her youth and the esthetics of her incompleteness.[3]

Rather than emphasizing a change in character, Nina Baym sees the revision as emphasizing a change in theme. She says:

> The matrix of values which radiates out from 'independence' in 1881 centers in 'awareness' in 1908, with attendant dislocations of emphasis. Awareness in 1881 is a means toward the end of an independent life; in 1908 the independent life is attained only in awareness--the two things are almost identical. The only possible independence is the independence of perfect enlightenment. Consequently, Isabel is no longer perceived as having failed, and, not having failed, she has no limitations or shortcomings of thematic consequence.[4]

In the Preface to Roderick Hudson James compares the act of revision to a painter's cleaning and retouching a canvas[5] or a nurse's preparation of her charges for presentation.[6] In the Preface to The Golden Bowl he says:

> The art of revision, the act of seeing it again, caused whatever I looked at on any page to flower before me as into the only terms that honourably expressed it; and the 'revised' element in the present Edition is accordingly these terms, these rigid conditions of re-perusal, registered; so many close notes, as who should say, on the particular vision of the matter itself that experience had at last made the only possible one.[7]

James goes on to say in the same Preface:

> The old matter is there, re-accepted, re-tasted, exquisitely re-assimilated and re-enjoyed--believed in, to be brief, with the same 'old' grateful faith (since whenever the faith, in a particular case, has become aware of a twinge of doubt I have simply concluded against the matter itself and left it out).[8]

Clearly James did not intend to change anything basic in his original works. When he no longer agreed with them, he eliminated them from the New York Edition. The evidence that both Baym and Mazzella give for their conclusions could, I think, be as easily applied to James's own theory regarding his revisions. Because I believe that James's revisions do clarify the earlier texts I will use the New York Editions of the novels. However, I will also note parallel quotations from the first edition of 1881 as given in the Norton Critical edition of The Portrait

of a Lady.

There are many similarities between Isabel and previous Jamesian heroines, other than the basic ones of wealth, youth and American nationality. Like the heroines of "The Last of the Valerii," "Madame de Mauves," "Adina," "Longstaff's Marriage," "An International Episode" and "Daisy Miller," Isabel leaves the United States and goes to Europe where problems regarding romance and marriage occur. Most of the heroines of the tales discussed in Chapter One lack one parent or both parents. Isabel's mother and father are both dead. None of the heroines of the tales is described as classically beautiful although all are attractive and have a particular charm. When comparing Isabel to her older sister Edith "[n]ineteen persons out of twenty (including the younger sister herself) pronounced Edith infinitely the prettier of the two; but the twentieth, besides reversing this judgement, had the entertainment of thinking all the others aesthetic vulgarians" (p. 41).[9]

Apart from superficial similarities there are also personality traits common to Isabel and her predecessors. Many of the heroines of the tales, for example, Adela Moore, Gertrude Whittaker, Euphemia de Mauves and Diana Belfield, are described as proud. Isabel is described as being "probably very liable to the sin of self-esteem" (p. 53) and having "an unquenchable desire to think well of herself" (p. 53). Along with pride many of the heroines are or try to be independent. Independence manifests itself in different ways in the heroines of the tales. In "A Day of Days," Adela Moore's independence keeps her from making a commitment to Thomas Ludlow, just as Isabel's independence keeps her from committing herself to either Caspar Goodwood or Lord Warburton. Of Caspar Goodwood Isabel thinks: "he seemed to deprive her of the sense

of freedom" (pp. 104-5).[10] Her refusal of Lord Warburton's offer of marriage seems to Isabel to be "a sort of personal accent to her independence" (p. 105). Adina, although not outwardly an independent woman, leaves her fiancé for a man all her friends consider unsuitable. Isabel, also, marries a man her friends consider unsuitable. Bessie Alden asserts her independence by refusing Lord Lambeth; she objects to being examined by his family and does not care what his mother and sister think of her departure from England. Not caring what others think is the main example of Daisy Miller's independence. Daisy's refusal to follow social conventions may be foolish but it also marks her as being independent. In The Portrait of a Lady, Isabel rebels against social conventions, albeit rather ineffectually. Isabel's similarity to previous heroines' dislike of convention is important because, like Daisy's failure to understand the importance of convention, Isabel's failure to understand contributes to the larger failure of an unhappy marriage. This aspect of Isabel's perception will be discussed in greater detail in the analysis of Isabel's failed potential.

Money plays as important a role in Isabel's life as it does in the lives of all the previous heroines. Although Gertrude and Euphemia are the only heroines of the early tales to fall prey to a fortune-hunter, the wealth of the heroine is certainly taken into consideration by all those around her. Like Gertrude and Euphemia, Isabel is pursued for her money, among her other charms. Isabel's marriage is as disastrous as Euphemia de Mauves', even though it does not involve death. In fact M. de Mauves' death is so melodramatic and romantic that it weakens the story. The Portrait of a Lady is a more realistic depiction not only of a bad marriage, but also of the causes of a bad marriage.

There are two causes for Isabel's failure. One is the plot conceived by Madame Merle to marry Isabel to Gilbert Osmond, Madame Merle's former lover and the father and guardian of their child Pansy. The other cause is Isabel's own character and desires. These causes are closely related: Madame Merle's plot succeeds because of Isabel's character and desires, not in spite of them. As Juliet McMaster points out, Isabel "is certainly a victim of circumstance and of unscrupulous manipulators, but it lies within herself that she is such easy prey to them."[11]

One of the reasons for Isabel's failure, the plot, depends on the inheritance Isabel receives from Mr. Touchett. Isabel meets Serena Merle when the latter arrives for a visit at Gardencourt. Isabel is captivated by Madame Merle and comes easily under her influence:

> Our heroine had always passed for a person of resources and had taken a certain pride in being one; but she wandered, as by the wrong side of the wall of a private garden, round the enclosed talents, accomplishments, aptitudes of Madame Merle. She found herself desiring to emulate them, and in twenty such ways this lady presented herself as a model. (p. 165)[12]

Madame Merle finds Isabel "'an exquisite creature'" (p. 176) but her interest in Isabel is quite directly related to how rich Isabel is.

Madame Merle mentions Osmond to Isabel while being very careful to conceal from Isabel her real relationship with him. Osmond is given as an example of an interesting person Isabel should meet if she goes to Florence. Osmond is a fellow American who lives in Italy and who has "'[n]o career, no name, no position, no fortune, no past, no future, no anything'" (p. 172). At this point Madame Merle's plot is hardly germinating because Isabel lacks one crucial factor--money. Madame Merle tells Isabel: "'You're extremely good-looking and extremely clever; in

yourself you're quite exceptional. You appear to have the vaguest ideas about your earthly possessions; but from what I can make out you're not embarrassed with an income. I wish you had a little money'" (p. 176). When Madame Merle learns from Mrs. Touchett that Isabel has inherited seventy thousand pounds from Mr. Touchett she can hardly contain her excitement.

> "A fortune!" Madame Merle softly repeated.
> "Isabel steps into something like seventy thousand pounds."
> Madame Merle's hands were clasped in her lap; at this she raised them, still clasped, and held them a moment against her bosom while her eyes, a little dilated, fixed themselves on those of her friend. (p. 181)[13]

The seventy thousand pounds completes Isabel: she becomes eligible in Madame Merle's mind to be Osmond's wife, and therefore Pansy's stepmother.

Madame Merle is extremely careful in carrying out her plan. Not until six months after Mr. Touchett's death does she tell Osmond about Isabel, who is staying in Florence at Mrs. Touchett's villa. Madame Merle's description of Isabel is calculated to arouse his interest:

> "Miss Archer isn't dingy; she's as bright as the morning. She corresponds to your description; it's for that I wish you to know her. She fills all your requirements."
> "More or less, of course."
> "No, quite literally. She's beautiful, accomplished, generous and, for an American, well-born. She's also very clever and very amiable, and she has a handsome fortune."
> Mr. Osmond listened to this in silence, appearing to turn it over in his mind with his eyes on his informant. "What do you want to do with her?" he asked at last.
> "What you see. Put her in your way."
> "Isn't she meant for something better than that?"
> "I don't pretend to know what people are meant for," said Madame Merle. "I only know what I can do with them."
> "I'm sorry for Miss Archer!" Osmond declared. (pp. 206-7)

James cleverly places this encounter after one between Madame Merle and Pansy, in which the mother's solicitude for her daughter is demonstrated.

It is important to Madame Merle that Isabel be generous and it is worth noting that it is Madame Merle who injects generosity into the description of Osmond's ideal woman, because it fits Isabel. Madame Merle is primarily looking out for her daughter and a generous stepmother would be an asset for Pansy. If she has money, Pansy's chances of making a good marriage are strengthened.

The calculation with which both Osmond and Madame Merle view Isabel is chilling. It does not take long for the pair to become co-conspirators. At the first meeting between Isabel and Osmond the suggestion of conspiracy is strong. Even Isabel notices it. The conversation between Madame Merle and Osmond "all had the rich readiness that would have come from rehearsal" (p. 212).[14] When Madame Merle compliments Isabel on her behavior "'You were charming, my dear; you were just as one would have wished you. You're never disappointing'" (p. 213), Isabel is annoyed. She tells Madame Merle: "'That's more than I intended. . . . I'm under no obligation that I know of to charm Mr. Osmond'" (p. 213). Unfortunately Isabel falls under Osmond's charm and fails to see what everyone else can see--that she is the victim of a plot.

The reasons why the plot is successful are found within Isabel herself. One major character trait which causes Isabel the most trouble is her self-professed love of independence. Most of Isabel's actions are in some way connected to her concept of independence. An examination of Isabel's attitudes to money and social convention help demonstrate why Isabel's love of independence causes her problems. At times, Isabel's attitudes to money and social convention exemplify her love of independence, but, at other times, they do not. These inconsistencies make it difficult for Isabel to distinguish between appearance and reality,

particularly in the case of Gilbert Osmond. At times Isabel thinks appearance is reality, while at other times she rejects this idea entirely. Isabel's failure to reconcile what she thinks is reality and what she thinks is appearance destroy her potential for a successful marriage.

Independence is a key word in a discussion of Isabel Archer. The first time Isabel is mentioned, her independence is also referred to. Mrs. Touchett's telegram from America states: "'Taken sister's girl, died last year, go to Europe, two sisters, quite independent'" (p. 24). Ralph wonders if Isabel's independence is "'in a moral or in a financial sense'" (p. 24). When Ralph first meets Isabel, her financial status is unclear, but her determination to be independent is immediately demonstrated. In reply to Ralph's comment that his mother has adopted Isabel she tells him, "'I'm not a candidate for adoption. . . . I'm very fond of my liberty'" (p. 30). Yet when Mrs. Touchett tells Isabel that she'll be taken to Florence if she does what Mrs. Touchett tells her, Isabel is almost ready to compromise. "'Do everything you tell me? I don't think I can promise that. . . . And yet, to go to Florence, I'd promise almost anything'" (p. 30).

Not only does Isabel insist on her independence, but she also believes she is lucky to be independent and thinks she should do something noble. "It was one of her theories that Isabel Archer was very fortunate in being independent, and that she ought to make some very enlightened use of that state" (p. 55).[15] At this point in her life Isabel is not rich; her independence is more of the spirit. Her desire to do something enlightened with her independence is a key factor in her decision to marry Osmond. She believes that few men are "worth a ruinous expenditure" (p. 56).[16] Isabel's basic notion of independence centers around the

freedom of her imagination. She marries Osmond because she thinks he will help her develop and make use of her imagination.

Isabel's love and need for independence enters conversations at her convenience. Regarding Isabel, Mrs. Touchett tells her son, "I shall do nothing with her, and she herself will do everything she chooses. She gave me notice of that" (p. 49).[17] Isabel is direct with her aunt that she will do as she pleases but when it suits her she forfeits her independence. When Lord Warburton invites Isabel to stay at Lockleigh, his family home, she tells him she is not free to decide.

> . . . "I'm afraid I can't make engagements. I'm quite in my aunt's hands."
>
> "Ah, pardon me if I say I don't exactly believe that. I'm pretty sure you can do whatever you want."
>
> "I'm sorry if I make that impression on you; I don't think it's a nice impression to make." (p. 76)[18]

Isabel has been trying to give exactly this impression as her statements to Ralph and Mrs. Touchett show. However she tries to avoid a potentially awkward situation with Lord Warburton by making the decision to visit Lockleigh up to her aunt. She does not have to decide what to do; she leaves it to someone else, and in doing so tries to avoid hurting Lord Warburton's feelings.

As mentioned before, Isabel ultimately rejects both Goodwood and Warburton because she thinks each will restrict her freedom. Of Warburton,

> What she felt was that a territorial, a political, a social magnate had conceived the design of drawing her into the system in which he rather invidiously lived and moved. A certain instinct, not imperious, but persuasive, told her to resist--murmured to her that virtually she had a system and an orbit of her own. (p. 95)[19]

She realizes she would have to accommodate herself to Warburton's world

and although it might be interesting she does not want to become a satellite.

Goodwood tries to appeal to Isabel's love of independence, but she does not agree with him.

> "If you were in the same place I should feel you were watching me, and I don't like that--I like my liberty too much. . . .
>
> "Who would wish less to curtail your liberty than I? What can give me greater pleasure than to see you perfectly independent--doing whatever you like? It's to make you independent that I want to marry you."
>
> "That's a beautiful sophism," said the girl with a smile more beautiful still.
>
> "An unmarried woman--a girl of your age--isn't independent. There are all sorts of things she can't do. She's hampered at every step."
>
> "That's as she looks at the question," Isabel answered with much spirit. "I'm not in my first youth--I can do what I choose--I belong quite to the independent class. I've neither father nor mother; I'm poor and of a serious disposition; I'm not pretty. I therefore am not bound to be timid and conventional; indeed I can't afford such luxuries." (pp. 142-3)[20]

This passage is important as it demonstrates several aspects of Isabel's character. First of all, Isabel's intelligence is shown by her recognition of Goodwood's sophism. No one can give Isabel independence; she must take it for herself if it is to be had at all. Second, Goodwood's mention of social conventions is simply eliminated by Isabel. She does not think a woman's freedom is hampered by convention unless the woman believes it to be so. Third, Isabel believes she is independent because she is poor. Once her financial status changes so does Isabel's attitude to money and independence. Fourth, Isabel believes that being timid and conventional is a luxury she cannot afford. The financial terminology is significant as once Isabel becomes rich she is not only able to "afford" being timid and conventional, but to a degree she actually succumbs to the traits she formerly resisted.

Isabel's love of independence may be a result of cultural conditioning as well as a personal preference. James was interested in the difference between European and American sensibilities. Isabel's ideas of independence and of the individual appear to be typically American. Richard Chase says: "Isabel ascribes to the American romance of the self. She believes that the self finds fulfillment either in its own isolated integrity or on a more or less transcendant ground where the contending forces of good and evil are symbolized abstractions."[21] F. O. Matthiessen refers to Isabel as a "firm grand-daughter of the Puritans."[22] Osmond is attractive to Isabel because he appears to have transcended ordinary life. He has exquisite taste and wonderful manners and Isabel believes that he will help her to develop her own taste, while at the same time creating an aesthetically perfect marriage. Chase's comments help to show why Isabel married Osmond; Matthiessen's comment helps to show why she stays married to him. Isabel, as a grand-daughter of the Puritans, accepts the consequences of her actions and in returning to Osmond seems to be doing penance for her earlier decision to marry him.

Oscar Cargill points out that:

> James has ironically married fearful opposites,--Isabel represents the ultimate of American idealism of her time and Osmond the ultimate of European orthodoxy in the same day. They are incompatible from the start, each deceived about the other because neither had any experience with the type of person the other was.[23]

Tony Tanner explains the marriage in Kantian terms:

> The world of means is the world of rampant egoism while the world of ends is the realm of true morality and love. These two worlds are effectively the upper and lower parts of James's moral world. And what happens to Isabel Archer is that while she thinks she is ascending towards the world of ends, she is in fact getting more deeply involved in the world of means.[24]

It may look as if James makes a distinction between corrupt Europeans and innocent, moral Americans. Although this generalization holds true in some cases, it does not in all. Osmond is American, not European; he has managed to appear to be European, in the same way Madame Merle does. Villainy is not reserved for either American or European. In The Portrait of a Lady the villains are Europeanized Americans; in The Wings of the Dove they are English; and in The Golden Bowl they are English, Italian and American. In The Golden Bowl none of the characters are clearly good or evil but can be either at various times.

The one consistent factor is that the heroines are American. This may be because James delves into the heroines more deeply than other characters and he may have thought that as an American he could portray the young American woman more convincingly than the young European woman. Making the heroine American also allows James the opportunity to reveal her character through her confrontation with a foreign society. Christof Wegelin warns the reader of James about making generalizations regarding the American/European distinction in James.

> James's international fiction [does not] rest, as some have asserted, on a distinction between moral and aesthetic values, between "cultural" inferiority but "moral" superiority in America and their opposites in Europe.[25]

This interpretation, says Wegelin, leads to "distortions and misreading of the moral significance of individual characters."[26] Wegelin's point is useful as it emphasizes the importance of the individual. James uses the back drop of cultural differences in order to explore individual moral choices. In Isabel's case, the moral choice depends very much on her love of independence.

Isabel's attitude to money is related to her ideas of independence.

She is never really aware of money until she has a significant amount. Mrs. Touchett is amazed that Isabel has no idea what her parents' house is worth or what she has inherited from them. In fact, Isabel has very little money relatively speaking and her travel is subsidized by Mrs. Touchett. When Isabel is left seventy thousand pounds her attitude to money changes. Instead of being independent because she is poor, Isabel now thinks she is independent because she is rich: "the girl presently made up her mind that to be rich was a virtue because it was to be able to do, and that to do could only be sweet" (p. 182).[26] Isabel's second opinion is probably a more conventional one and is the first change of mind that signifies the beginning of trouble for her. Now she feels compelled to do something fine, because she has the means to do so.

Isabel's friend Henrietta is quick to warn her of the danger being rich will create: "'You're too fastidious; you've too many graceful illusions. Your newly acquired thousands will shut you up more and more to the society of a few selfish and heartless people who will be interested in keeping them up'" (p. 188).[27] Henrietta's words are almost prophetic. She goes on to warn Isabel that sometimes Isabel will not only displease others but also herself. Isabel eventually creates unhappiness for herself, Osmond, Henrietta, Ralph and anyone else who cares about her.

Isabel's fortune is the key to Osmond's pursuit of her and he is clever enough to tell her that he is glad she is rich. He confronts the issue of fortune-hunting.

> "I won't pretend I'm sorry you're rich; I'm delighted. I delight in everything that's yours--whether it be money or virtue. Money's a horrid thing to follow, but a charming thing to meet. It seems to me, however, that I've sufficiently

> proved the limits of my itch for it: I never in my life tried to earn a penny, and I ought to be less subject for suspicion than most of the people one sees grubbing and grabbing." (p. 296)[28]

Isabel is less perceptive about Osmond's sophism than she was about Goodwood's. The fact that Osmond has never worked does not diminish his liking for money. As Osmond seems completely unsuited to work, it is unlikely that he could have made money even if he had tried. Osmond's honesty does not deter Isabel; in fact, she seems to think her marriage to him will provide an "enlightened use" (p. 55) of her independence: "The desire for unlimited expansion had been succeeded in her soul by the sense that life was vacant without some private duty that might gather one's energies to a point" (p. 297).[29] She wonders what has happened to her earlier desires and her determination not to marry and decides: "There was explanation enough in the fact that [Osmond] was her lover, her own, and that she should be able to be of use to him. She could surrender to him with a kind of humility, she could marry him with a kind of pride; she was not only taking, she was giving" (p. 297).[30] Along with being able to give to Osmond, Isabel also sees that she can give to his daughter. "Pansy already so represented part of the service she could render, part of the responsibility she could face" (p. 298).[31]

Later, when Isabel's marriage begins to crumble and she spends a long night meditating on her life, she comes to some upsetting conclusions regarding money and her marriage. She considers why she was attracted to Osmond in the first place and realizes that "she had not read him right" (p. 357). She had hoped to help Osmond:

> That he was poor and lonely and yet that somehow he was noble--that was what had interested her and seemed to give her her opportunity. . . . She would launch his boat for him; she would

> be his providence; it would be a good thing to love him. And she had loved him, she had so anxiously and yet so ardently given herself--a good deal for what she found in him, but a good deal also for what she brought him and what might enrich the gift. . . . But for her money, as she saw today, she would never have done it. . . . At bottom the money had been a burden, had been on her mind, which was filled with the desire to transfer the weight of it to some other conscience, to some more prepared receptacle. What would lighten her own conscience more effectually than to make it over to the man with the best taste in the world? (p. 357-8)[32]

Isabel comes to the unhappy conclusion that her money was a key factor in her decision to marry Osmond. Because she thought he was such a noble man, she decided to marry and thereby abdicate responsibility for her money.

Isabel's inconsistent attitude to social convention causes her as much trouble as her attitude to money does. At the beginning of the novel, Isabel makes it clear that she does not wish to flaunt social convention or to follow it categorically: what she wants is to choose in each case. She does not want to make uninformed choices either. She appreciates her aunt's telling her about the social conventions and yet makes it clear that the final choice of behavior will be her own.

> "I shall always tell you," her aunt answered, "whenever I see you taking what seems to me too much liberty."
> "Pray do; but I don't say I shall always think your remonstrance just."
> "Very likely not. You're too fond of your own ways."
> "Yes, I think I'm fond of them. But I always want to know the things one shouldn't do."
> "So as to do them?" asked her aunt.
> "So as to choose," said Isabel. (p. 67)[33]

Isabel is not unconcerned with social conventions. At times she accepts their importance but at other times rejects it. The best example of Isabel's rejection of convention is her conversation with Madame Merle regarding clothes. Madame Merle tells Isabel:

> "When you've lived for as long as I you'll see that every human being has his shell and that you must take the shell into account. By the shell I mean the whole envelope of circumstances. There's no such thing as an isolated man or woman; we're each of us made up of some cluster of appurtenances. . . . One's self --for other people--is one's expression of one's self; and one's house, one's furniture, one's garments, the books one reads, the company one keeps--these things are all expressive." (p. 175)[34]

Isabel disagrees completely:

> "I don't agree with you. I think just the other way. I don't know whether I succeed in expressing myself, but I know that nothing else expresses me. Nothing that belongs to me is any measure of me; everything's on the contrary a limit, a barrier, and a perfectly arbitrary one. Certainly the clothes which, as you say, I choose to wear, don't express me; and heaven forbid they should. . . . My clothes may express the dressmaker, but they don't express me. To begin with, it's not my own choice that I wear them; they're imposed on me by society." (p. 175)

Although Isabel does not think she should be judged by her appearance, she tends to judge other people that way. She criticizes Caspar Goodwood not only for his clothes but also for his physical appearance.

> She wished him no ounce less of his manhood, but she sometimes thought he would be rather nicer if he looked, for instance, a little differently. His jaw was too square and set and his figure too straight and stiff: these things suggested a want of easy consonance with the deeper rhythms of life. Then she viewed with reserve a habit he had of dressing always in the same manner; it was not apparently that he wore the same clothes continually, for, on the contrary, his garments had a way of looking rather too new. But they all seemed of the same piece; the figure, the stuff, was so drearily usual. (p. 106)[35]

It is unfair of Isabel to judge Goodwood by his clothing when she insists clothing does not express a person's inner being. It is even worse to criticize a person because of his physical appearance. Goodwood may be able to choose his clothing but he cannot change the look of his face.

Isabel's greatest mistake concerning appearance is her misjudgement of Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond. She is dazzled by

Madame Merle's accomplishments and although she is concerned that Madame Merle seems to be "too perfectly the social animal" (p. 167), she decides that "a charming surface doesn't necessarily prove one superficial" (p. 167).[36] Even though Isabel suspects Madame Merle of being a completely social creature, she cannot see her as being superficial. Madame Merle's attention to the manners and forms of life are surpassed only by Gilbert Osmond's.

Perhaps the most appalling example of Osmond's attention to the forms of behavior occurs when Isabel comes to tell him that Ralph is dying. In her distress, she fails to knock and Osmond criticizes her for this. He goes on to worry about how things will look if she goes to England alone to be at Ralph's death-bed. He insists that Ralph's existence makes little difference to him and Isabel: "'Your cousin's nothing to you; he's nothing to us. You smile most expressively when I talk about us, but I assure you that we, we, Mrs. Osmond, is all I know'" (p. 446).[37] Osmond's conception of marriage entails Isabel's complete subservience. He cannot even offer sympathy to Isabel because he does not care about Ralph. Isabel rejects his notion of their marriage. Isabel observes that Osmond speaks "in the name of something sacred and precious--the observance of a magnificent form" (p. 446) and that the form is more important than the reality it conceals. It does not matter to Osmond that their marriage is a failure; what matters is that it should appear to be a success.

Isabel thought she had married a man who not only had good taste but who would help her to develop her own. To her dismay Isabel learns that she is to have no ideas of her own. "Her mind was to be his --attached to his own like a small garden-plot to a deer-park" (p. 362).

After avoiding marriage to two men on the grounds of independence, Isabel marries a man who is not satisfied with controlling her actions but wants to control her thoughts as well. Osmond himself uses a particularly hideous metaphor when explaining the situation to Caspar Goodwood: "'We're as united, you know, as the candlestick and the snuffers'" (p. 420).

Isabel acknowledges that initially she practised deception on Osmond. She does not know the extent of Osmond's deception and she takes a great deal of the responsibility for their mis-match on her own shoulders. "She had effaced herself when he first knew her; she had made herself small, pretending there was less of her than there really was" (p. 357). Isabel's sense of responsibility is strong. She believes that she had made a free choice to marry Osmond and that she must live with the consequences of that action. Even when she learns that Madame Merle had arranged the marriage and that Osmond would not have married her had she been poor, Isabel still wants to take responsibility for the marriage and does not think she should abandon it. Her marriage is "the single sacred act" (p. 386) in her life and its failure is devastating to Isabel. "They had attempted only one thing, but that one thing was to have been exquisite. Once they missed it nothing else would do; there was no conceivable substitute for that success" (pp. 386-7).[38] Knowledge of the plot does not discourage Isabel from accepting responsibility. After having tried to shift the responsibility of her money to Osmond, she perhaps over-reacts and insists on returning to Rome after Ralph's death. Isabel's promise to Pansy is one reason why she returns but the main reason is that Isabel believes that she must live by her choices, no matter how unhappy they make her.

The Portrait of a Lady, besides being an early Jamesian novel

about money and the marriage of a rich young woman, is also one of the early novels in which James uses a controlling symbol. The symbol, in this case, is the portrait. A portrait has definite dimensions. Like a painted portrait, The Portrait of a Lady also has definite dimensions. It does not tell the whole story of Isabel's life; instead, it tells the part that fits together. As James says, "the 'whole' of anything is never told; you can only take what groups together. What I have done has that unity--it groups together. It is complete in itself--and the rest may be taken up or not later."[39] The novel must have a form, or limits, in order to tell a unified and coherent story. In order for James to paint Isabel's portrait, he must choose restrictions or limits. In the same way, Isabel must come to paint the picture of her life by choosing restrictions. Isabel chooses marriage as a means to develop her life. As Tony Tanner says, "without any limits the self can never take on any contours, cannot become something real."[40] Isabel's mistake, the cause of her failure, is her faulty judgement of appearances, of the pictures presented.

The choices Isabel makes regarding marriage show the connection between the theme of failure and the controlling symbol. A portrait shows the appearance of a person and is a fixed representation. Isabel avoids marriage to Goodwood and Warburton because she believes they will limit her freedom and so cause her to become fixed. Both men are rejected because of how Isabel sees them, not because of how they are. Goodwood's offer is turned down because, as already mentioned, he looks to Isabel "too straight and stiff" (p. 106). Goodwood is the most vocal in his resolution to let Isabel be independent. He, unlike Isabel, understands that as a single woman she has limitations imposed on her by society.

Isabel's failure to appreciate Goodwood's example of the lack of mobility accorded a single woman is part of her overall failure to understand the importance of social conventions.

James once said, "We know a man imperfectly until we know his society, and we but half know a society until we know its manners."[41] Manners or social conventions can be shortcuts to social behavior and relationships. When Isabel sees her husband seated while Madame Merle is standing, she does not quite realize that something is wrong, but the scene does make an impression on her.

> What struck Isabel first was that he was sitting while Madame Merle stood; there was an anomaly in this that arrested her. Then she perceived that they had arrived at a desultory pause in their exchange of ideas and were musing, face to face, with the freedom of old friends who sometimes exchange ideas without uttering them. There was nothing to shock in this; they were old friends in fact. But the thing made an image, lasting only a moment, like a sudden flicker of light. Their relative positions, their absorbed mutual gaze, struck her as something detected. But it was all over by the time she had fairly seen it. Madame Merle had seen her and had welcomed her without moving; her husband, on the other hand, had instantly jumped up. He presently murmured something about wanting a walk and, after having asked their visitor to excuse him, left the room. (pp. 342-3)[42]

Isabel, because she knows something of social convention, realizes it is wrong for Osmond to be sitting while a woman stands. What Isabel fails to grasp is the significance of their positions. Until the end of the novel Isabel does not understand the importance of social conventions. The utility of knowing how to read and manipulate social conventions eludes her. She does not grasp the fact that social conventions are an inescapable part of society. One may rebel against them, or ignore them, but the successful person must understand them.

Isabel rejects Goodwood because she does not like the picture

he presents. She rejects Warburton for the same reason and makes a similar mistake. Because she thinks marriage to Warburton will entail (as it will) a certain attention to formal social conventions, she refuses to marry him. What she fails to perceive is that Warburton acknowledges his social duties but does not regard them as the foundation of his existence. Being Lady Warburton would mean Isabel would have to observe certain practices on occasion, but the public display would not necessarily be the reality of the marriage. Lord Warburton does not take his position as seriously as Isabel does. He is even willing to move anywhere in the world that Isabel likes.[43]

When Isabel visits Lockleigh, Warburton's home, she reflects that "it seemed to her a matter of course that it should be a noble picture" (p. 75). Unfortunately, the picture Isabel has created in her mind, not the underlying reality, is what guides her decision. Isabel's decision to marry Osmond is again based on a picture she creates. Ralph comments on the "fine theory" (p. 294) Isabel invents about Osmond; she imagines what Osmond is like and marries him for the imagined picture rather than for what he really is like.

The symbol of the portrait as the limits of a life is used when Ed Rosier comes to visit Isabel to talk about a possible marriage between himself and Pansy. Isabel has been married three years and Rosier notices a change in her.

> The years had touched her only to enrich her; the flower of her youth had not faded, it only hung more quietly on its stem. She had lost something of that quick eagerness to which her husband had privately taken exception--she had more the air of being able to wait. Now, at all events, framed in the gilded doorway, she struck our young man as the picture of a gracious lady. (p. 310)

The framework of the doorway is like Isabel's marriage which frames, defines and limits her life. The liveliness of Isabel's youth is being controlled and confined by Osmond who wants his wife to present the picture of a "gracious lady."

The controlling symbol of the portrait is important in two ways. First, a portrait shows the superficial and a portrait or picture can show a life which is apparently happy. Isabel's life, whether or not she is happy, must appear to be happy, according to the dictates of her husband. Second, the frame or limits of the portrait symbolize Isabel's marriage which frames and limits her life. By confronting the limits of her marriage, Isabel learns about herself and life. She realizes that because of her independence she has chosen the limits of her life in the form of a marriage. Therefore, the symbol of the portrait not only parallels one of the themes of the novel--the discrepancy between appearance and reality--but it also gives the novel its basic structure.

Another famous portrait of a lady which James was familiar with was Browning's "My Last Duchess." The parallels between the poem and the novel are significant and may not be accidental. Gilbert Osmond is very much like the Duke of Ferrara, a mean-minded man concerned with appearances. Although Osmond does not kill Isabel as the Duke kills his Duchess, he does try to control his wife as the Duke does. Browning's poem, like James's novel, shows the discrepancy between surface behavior and underlying feelings. The Duke reveals himself while talking about his former wife. Osmond reveals his true petty nature in his treatment of Isabel. Both men want their marriages to appear without fault and their wives to behave as they dictate. In a sense both men try to paint a pretty picture of a marriage and in doing so reveal the ugliness in

their own minds.

Isabel's major choice in life concerns her independence and culminates in her marriage to Osmond. Critics have been divided on most issues concerning Isabel, not the least of which is her concept of independence. Oscar Cargill and Arnold Kettle believe that the theme of The Portrait of a Lady is the evaluation of the inadequacy of Isabel's view of freedom.[44] F. O. Matthiessen believes that James shows how trapped Isabel is; he believes that Isabel has no freedom at all. He says:

> In portraying her character and her fate, James was also writing an essay on the interplay of free will and determinism. Isabel's own view is that she was "perfectly free," that she married Osmond of her most deliberate choice, and that, however miserable one may be, one must accept the consequences of one's acts. James knew how little she was free, other than to follow to an impulsive extreme everything she had been made by her environment and background. . . . He had shown that she was completely mistaken in believing that "the world lay before her --she could do whatever she chose".[45]

From what James says in his writings on the naturalists, it is unlikely he would create a character who does not have freedom. Arnold Goldsmith points out that "not only did James criticize the naturalists' obsession with the carnal side of life, but also their denial of free will."[46] James, as Goldsmith notes, realizes that man cannot control everything, that although "Man's free will is limited in controlling external circumstances such as life and death, he can reign supreme as master of his soul."[47] Donald K. Mull contends that, "'To be able to do' is one thing, is sweet, is precisely Isabel's freedom, to 'do' is quite another, for the doing is a limit imposed on the self's ability to do."[48] Mull believes that Isabel finally chooses Osmond because she "again chooses against choice, chooses to make over to--or against--the man with the best

taste in the world the material agency of choice."[49] Isabel herself is clear that she is giving over to Osmond her money because she thinks he has superior taste. She does not see marriage to Osmond as a rejection of independence; instead it will be the act that makes the best use of her independence.

Isabel's decision to return to Rome reflects a certain inflexibility, but this inflexibility is what demonstrates her moral sense. Dorothea Krook comments:

> What she comes to feel is that, having this degree of moral responsibility, she must accept the consequences; and this means going back to Osmond and enduring, simply 'enduring,' her life with him as the only expiation open to her.[50]

As narrator, James says:

> She was a person of great faith, and if there was a great deal of folly in her wisdom those who judge her severely may have the satisfaction of finding that, later, she became consistently wise only at the cost of an amount of folly which will constitute almost a direct appeal to charity. (p. 95)

As Dorothea Krook and James himself point out, Isabel makes many mistakes. She fails to distinguish between appearance and reality. She mistakenly thinks that a fine attention to manners signifies an underlying moral sense. She learns that the two people who have the best manners are morally corrupt. She learns that she cannot impose on others what she herself rejects: she cannot give Osmond independence for the same reason she rejects Goodwood's offer. Isabel learns that she had faulty knowledge, but also that she had faulty judgement. Her acceptance of the consequences of her choices shows her consistency and moral responsibility. Tony Tanner says, "If nothing else, The Portrait of a Lady shows us the birth of a conscience out of the spoiling of a life."[51] Rather than the

birth of a conscience, I think the novel shows us the birth of a consciousness, particularly the birth of social awareness. Isabel always has a conscience; what she needs to learn is that other people may not.

The Portrait of a Lady also shows us the beginning of James's use of a controlling symbol. The similarity between theme and structure strengthens the novel and is an example of James's theory of art. In The Wings of the Dove and The Golden Bowl, James refines further the use of a controlling symbol as he develops the theme of failed potential.

CHAPTER THREE

THE WINGS OF THE DOVE

In The Wings of the Dove, independence is as central to the outcome as it is in The Portrait of a Lady, but a greater distinction is made between financial and moral independence. James uses a similar plot: a woman plans the marriage of a man to a rich young woman. In The Wings of the Dove, Kate Croy is more morally reprehensible than her counterpart, Madame Merle. Kate plans the marriage of her lover, Merton Densher, to Milly Theale so that he will become rich on Milly's death. Once wealthy, Densher would be the ideal candidate for marriage to Kate. She loves him when she is poor, but as she has no money either and recognizes her love and need for it, she devises a way to get money for them. Madame Merle stands to gain little materially by the marriage of Isabel to Osmond. She hopes to improve her daughter's life rather than her own. As Pansy is unaware that Madame Merle is her mother, it is unlikely that she would do anything to help her financially. Kate, however, stands to gain directly from her plot.

The central character of The Wings of the Dove, Milly Theale, is similar to Isabel in that she has great potential. Milly is wealthy, independent, intelligent and like Isabel has a strong moral sense. Unlike Isabel or most of the early heroines, Milly is very ill. Her illness contributes to her failure. It means that Milly is not able to live a long and happy life, but illness is not the major reason for Milly's failure to achieve happiness, particularly a happy marriage. The

reason for the failure is found in the people around Milly, specifically Kate and Densher who plot against her. Milly's imminent death is unfortunate, but the real tragedy is that even while she is alive she is not allowed to be happy.

Money is the great factor in this novel. I should like to examine how each of the characters in the novel views money. Through these viewpoints the various characters' moral senses can be determined. How each character treats Milly depends on how rich she is. Milly is defeated by the petty minds around her but even in her death there is a certain amount of triumph. Milly, unlike Isabel, has a tangible effect on the moral sense of at least one person, Merton Densher. In The Wings of the Dove, Milly's personal failure of potential is partially vitiated by the awakening of Densher's moral sense. I shall examine the symbol of the dove, the controlling symbol of the novel, to show its relationship to the theme of failure.

Unlike the characters surrounding Isabel in The Portrait of a Lady, nearly everyone around Milly Theale is interested in her money. In Isabel's case only Madame Merle and Osmond read value into Isabel because of her bank balance. In Milly's case, Sir Luke Strett, her physician, is the only clearly financially disinterested person. Money is much more the subject of interest for the society as a whole in The Wings of the Dove than in The Portrait of a Lady. Milly's position as a rich woman therefore becomes more precarious. Unlike Isabel who is jolted into wealth, Milly has always had an extraordinary amount of money, and so is used to what money can do, but does not revere it as the other characters do. Mrs. Stringham muses on Milly's wealth and how much it is a part of Milly.

> Her young friend had in a sublime degree a sense closed to the general question of difficulty. . . . She kept it completely at a distance . . . . It came back of course to the question of money . . . it was just this, this incomparably and nothing else, that when all was said and done most made it. . . . the girl couldn't get away from her wealth. . . . She couldn't have lost it if she had tried--that was what it was to be really rich. It had to be the thing you were.[1]

Wealth has contributed a great deal to Milly's formation, so much so that Susan does not believe Milly can be separated from it. Susan is not like the people after Milly's money; she simply likes to bask in Milly's reflected glory while loving the girl very much.

Kate Croy's love of money seems almost the natural attitude of one in her position. Her father and sister are constantly taking money from her, each criticizing the other for it. Mr. Croy resents the fact Kate gives her sister Marian Condrip money, not because it means Kate is deprived but because he is deprived. "What he could n't forgive was her dividing with Marian her scant share of the provision their mother had been able to leave them. She should have divided it with him" (I, p. 24). Lionel Croy pushes Kate away from him so that she will put herself in a better position to gain money. If Kate rejects her father her wealthy Aunt Maud will provide for her and arrange a good marriage. At the beginning of the novel Kate is willing to give up this opportunity to struggle along with her father.

Kate's need for money is clear. Without it she is condemned to a life like her sister's, a life filled with things that "asserted their differences without tact and without taste" (II, p. 365). Densher notes this when he goes to see Kate in Chelsea. She does not fit in. In fact Densher feels "very specially sorry for her--which was not the view that had determined his start in the morning; yet also that he himself would

have taken it all, as he might say, less hard. He could have lived in such a place" (II, p. 365); Kate cannot. Her change from a daughter almost pleading with her father to allow her to live with him in poverty to a woman who will do anything for money, including prostituting herself to the man she is in love with, is remarkable but not implausible. Kate's descent into villainy is the act of a desperate woman, certainly not excusable but, given the society in which she lives, not shocking. She is "sold," almost, by her father to her aunt. His upholding of money as more valuable than a loving family relationship is the first step of Kate's moral collapse.

Kate's greed might probably have never exerted itself to the lengths it does if she had not met Milly. Presented with a woman who has more money than she can possibly spend, Kate's morality begins to loosen. From early in their relationship Milly is supplying Kate with things that money can buy and although Kate protests, she takes advantage of Milly.

> Kate as promptly embraced the propriety of making it clear that she must forswear shops till she should receive some guarantee that the contents of each one she entered as a humble companion shouldn't be placed at her feet; yet that was in truth not before she had found herself in possession, under whatever protests, of several precious ornaments and other minor conveniences. (I, p. 177)

Before Densher knows what Kate's plan is, he suspects it may be simply that Kate sees Milly as a convenient way for Kate and Densher to meet. It does not take long for Kate to let Densher know what she plans. Realizing Milly has not long to live, Kate is willing to have her lover make love to another woman. At this point, Kate's greed becomes her driving force; her morality begins to dissolve and with that her love for Densher is damaged. Densher's attitude toward money is influenced by

Kate's. He does not like being poor but does not really mind it. His participation in Kate's scheme results from his love for her, not from a love of money. If he has money, then he will have Kate, as she makes very clear. So he is willing to go along with her plan. In a sense Densher is planning to buy Kate as a spouse. She is willing to sell, or at least "rent" him to Milly for financial gain.

All the other people around Milly are interested in money. Mrs. Lowder's main objection to Merton Densher is that he is poor; Kate's father and sister object to him for the same reason. If Kate goes to live with her rich aunt, she will be provided for and her immediate family is interested in the help she will be able to provide. Both Lionel Croy and Marian Condrip try to make Kate feel guilty so that she will go to Maud Lowder. Kate understands her situation perfectly. Neither father nor sister care for her, only for what she can give them. Kate's theory of giving is shown at the beginning of the novel. "The more you gave yourself the less of you was left. There were always people to snatch at you, and it would never occur to them that they were eating you up. They did that without tasting" (I, p. 33). Later Kate and Densher try to take from Milly. She is, in a sense, "eaten up," but instead of there being less of Milly remaining, her vivid spiritual presence, symbolized by the spreading of the dove's wings, covers Kate and Densher, and she becomes even larger in death than she had been in life.

Kate's family's habit of taking is a reflection of the larger society of London. Her aunt represents London to her; "Mrs. Lowder was London, was life--the roar of the siege and the thick of the fray" (I, p. 32). By taking Kate into her home, Mrs. Lowder helps her, but she

also wants to possess Kate. It is not enough for Kate to leave her father; she must sever all ties with him. Having Kate in her house means that Mrs. Lowder's social life will improve considerably--for Kate will attract guests and her aunt can exercise her power in selecting a husband for Kate.

Lord Mark has been chosen by Mrs. Lowder as a suitable candidate for marriage. He is not wealthy but he does have a title and it is clear that if Kate marries the man of her aunt's choice, the couple will be rewarded with financial help. "Their aunt would be munificent when their aunt should be content" (I, 44). By the end of Book I, Kate is placed in a search for money. When Merton suggests in Book II that they marry immediately, Kate declines; she is hoping that her aunt will grow to like Densher and give him the support she is willing to extend to Lord Mark. Once Milly arrives Lord Mark's attention begins to turn to her from Kate. Although not as attractive as Kate, Milly is agreeable and her money is more than compensation for her lack of beauty.

Milly's servants in Venice, Eugenio and Pasquale, complete the picture of greed. They care for Milly because they are paid to. Eugenio is described by Milly as "for ever carrying one well-kept Italian hand to his heart and plunging the other straight into her pocket, which, as she had instantly observed him to recognize, fitted it like a glove" (II, p. 133). Because the bond between Milly and Eugenio is a clear one it is a strong and happy one, "an indestructible link [that] formed the ground of a happy relation" (II, p. 133). Eugenio's and Pasquale's financial basis for a relationship with Milly is balanced by Sir Luke Strett's basis of love. Everyone else around Milly is deceptive about their reasons for their affection.

Financial and moral independence is the key to the triangular relationship of Milly, Kate and Densher. These are the people who are affected morally by what happens--the reactions of the others are on the plane of emotions. Two things are happening in the novel at the same time: while Kate is striving (with Densher) to become financially independent, her morality is eroding away and somewhat paradoxically, the more Milly is seen as a gold mine by Kate and Densher, the broader is the basis made for her final moral triumph. Milly loses love, gives away her money, and dies; Kate has health and gains money at the expense of love. Neither Milly nor Kate is changed morally. Milly realizes what is being done to her and in her sadness "turn[s] her face to the wall" (II, p. 270), but she is fundamentally the same person, only scarred. Kate does not experience a moral awakening in the way Densher does; she only sees that the game has been played and that in her victory she has really lost. Her recognition that she and Densher will "'never be again as we were'" (II, p. 405) does not indicate an acceptance of her own immorality, rather it shows her realization that because of Densher's change, they cannot be the same as they were. She knows what she has done is wrong, but this knowledge stems from her failure, not from guilt over Milly's pain.

Critics disagree on The Wings of the Dove. Leo Bersani believes that "there is very little development of character"[2] in it; while Jean Kimball sees Milly's life as "justified, not by the use which others make of it, but by her own entirely subjective, entirely inward development of her self."[3] Stephen Koch thinks that "the impersonal transcendence of Milly Theale [is] a medium for the 'personal drama' of Kate and Densher."[4] James provides enough information about his three central characters, Milly, Kate and Densher, to justify their actions and show their actions

as a logical outcome of their personalities. Like Isabel, who must be true to her own self, her own moral code, Milly, Kate, and Merton discover things about themselves, about the relationship between what they are as moral beings and what they can do. Each character must finally act in relation to his or her self. What James does in The Wings of the Dove is to broaden this journey of the self to include three characters from the one he showed in The Portrait of a Lady.

Jean Kimball's comment that Milly's development is "inward" is important as it points to one of James's basic tenets. Bersani uses the words "solitary integrity" to describe what James's characters (and by analogy human beings) must achieve. Milly's turn inward is the beginning of her search for solitary integrity. She has tried the path of love, but her love for Densher, although not destroyed, is shown to her by Lord Mark to be a futile endeavor, futile in this world. Once Lord Mark tells Milly that Kate and Densher are secretly engaged, Milly loses her will to live. She does not lose her love, though, and demonstrates the magnanimity of her soul by still giving Densher her fortune even though he has deceived her and even though she believes he may use the fortune to marry Kate. Milly's love for Densher is totally selfless and quite uncontrollable. At lunch with Kate and Densher, after the chance encounter at the National Gallery, Milly realizes she loves Dènsher no matter what. "Whatever he did or he didn't Milly knew she should still like him--there was no alternative to that" (I, p. 300). Her only dismay is that Densher will regard her as the others do; that is, be kind to her because she is a sick person.

Koch's conception of the novel in terms of Milly's "impersonal transcendence" is an attempt, I believe, to justify the work to critics

such as Leavis who think that James did not endow Milly with enough personality or life. Dorothea Krook's interpretation of the novel as a generalising and idealising of James's main themes in previous novels is more to the point. In James, it is through the particular that the universal is expressed. The loss of an individual who represents or holds a universal truth is much more chilling and tragic than the rejection of the truth as concept. Milly's transcendence is impersonal only in that it is very intimately personal in the first place. The personal drama therefore must include Milly as Dorothea Krook says.[5] Milly is the third point of the triangle. Kate's mistake is in assuming that because Milly is dying, she is expendable. Although Kate quite genuinely likes Milly, and even warns her of the dangers of Lancaster Gate and its world, her eagerness to make Milly a convenience destroys her relationship with Densher.

Milly's last interview with Densher deeply upsets him. He is beginning to feel the effect of Milly's love. His conversation with Kate shows that his feelings for her are disintegrating. She does not understand what an ordeal his last meeting with Milly has been and when she wonders why he did not lie to Milly he is amazed. "Densher stared--he was stupefied; the 'possible' thus glanced at by Kate being exactly the alternative he had had to face in Venice and to put utterly away from him. Nothing was stranger than such a difference in their view of it" (II, p. 323). Kate's words following Densher's suggestion that the lie wouldn't have changed things, "'You mean she would have had no faith in your correction'" (II, p. 323) are spoken "with a promptitude that affected him of a sudden as almost glib" (II, p. 323). When Densher begins to tell her what took place when he finally saw Milly, Kate is

still wondering why he did not lie to Milly. The reason becomes clear.

> "If I had denied you, moreover," Densher said with his eyes on her, "I'd have stuck to it."
>
> She took for a moment the intention of his face. "You mean that to convince her you'd have insisted or somehow proved--?"
>
> "I mean that to convince you I'd have insisted or somehow proved--!"
>
> Kate looked for her moment at a loss. "To convince 'me'?"
>
> "I wouldn't have made my denial, in such conditions, only to take it back afterwards."
>
> With this quickly light came for her, and with it also her colour flamed. "Oh you'd have broken with me, to make your denial a truth? You'd have 'chucked' me"--she embraced it perfectly--"to save your conscience?"
>
> "I couldn't have done anything else," said Merton Densher. (II, p. 326)

Densher has been prepared to do anything to save the plan, even allow Milly to believe a lie, but he cannot tell her one himself. Kate begins to suggest that the lie would have been beneficial for Milly, that Milly would have been grateful. Because Milly loves Densher, Kate realizes he has power over her. He has experienced Milly's power or strength, a facet that Kate does not understand.

Another side of Milly's life that Kate misunderstands, perhaps willfully, is whether or not Milly did "have it all." Two people comment that the world is all before Milly, an echo no doubt of Isabel's position. One of these people is Sir Luke Strett; the other is Kate. Kate makes the move from considering Milly as having the world before her to having had it all, a position that is shaky at best. Densher, certainly, has doubts about what Milly has had. Kate comments that Milly is satisfied, that she has died with "'the peace of having loved'" (II, p. 332). Merton is confused:

> He raised his eyes to her. "Is that peace?"
>
> "Of having been loved," she went on. "That is. Of having," she wound up, "realised her passion. She wanted

> nothing more. She has had all she wanted."
>
> Lucid and always grave, she gave this out with a beautiful authority that he could for the time meet with no words. He could only again look at her, though with the sense in doing so that he made her more than he intended take his silence for assent. (II, 323)

Kate tries to justify her actions and feelings by attempting to lessen Milly's tragedy. Milly's great desire was to live, and her loss of that can hardly be considered peaceful. Kate's physical presence has an immense influence on Densher; her closeness reminds him of the day she came to his rooms in Venice. "He could practically deny in such conditions nothing that she said" (II, p. 333). The power of sexual attraction is great and both Kate and Densher use sex as a weapon or lever in their relationship. Densher's insistence on Kate's coming to his rooms while they are in Venice is an example of his attempt to maintain some control in the relationship. Kate's visit is an act of prostitution; she is proving to Densher that she loves him so that he will continue with their plan to get Milly's money. Densher uses his promise to lie to get Kate to come to his rooms; she uses sex to get him to promise to lie. Densher tells her, "'I'll tell any lie you want, any your idea requires, if you'll only come to me'" (II, p. 200). Kate is willing to go along with this plan--a fact that startles Densher. "He had in truth not expected of her that particular vulgarity (not being shocked by his request), but the absence of it only added the thrill of a deeper reason to his sense of possibilities" (II, p. 200). Densher, as we later see, is unable to keep his part of the bargain.

Kate uses sex to hold Densher when he wants to forget their plan shortly before Milly's death. Densher's conscience is beginning to bother him and he believes that in order to make his relationship with

Kate work, they must marry as they are, not waiting to hear about Milly's death, and a possible bequest. He tells Kate:

> "We've played our dreadful game and we've lost. We owe it to ourselves, we owe it to our feeling for ourselves and for each other, not to wait another day. Our marriage will--fundamentally, somehow, don't you see?--right everything that's wrong, and I can't express to you my impatience. We've only to announce it--and it takes off the weight. . . . Something has snapped, has broken in me, and here I am. It's as I am that you must have me." (II, pp. 347-8)

Kate argues with Densher that there is no reason for the change of heart, no ideal. She says she will do what Densher asks because of his "moral certainty" (II, p. 349) but this is not yet a fact. Her request for an idea crushes Densher, as he does not have one--only a feeling about what he should do. Into Densher's moral confusion comes Kate's physical being and the split between the two is patched for the moment.

> She made it all out, bent upon her--the idea he did n't have, and the idea he had, and his failure of insistence when it brought up that challenge, and his sense of her personal presence, and his horror, almost, of her lucidity. They made in him a mixture that might have been rage, but that was turning quickly to mere cold thought, thought which led to something else and was like a new dim dawn. It affected her then, and she had one of the impulses, in all sincerity, that had before this, between them, saved their position. When she had come nearer to him, when, putting her hand upon him, she made him sink with her, as she leaned to him, into their old pair of chairs, she prevented irresistably, she forestalled, the waste of his passion. She had an advantage with his passion now. (II, p. 350)

Kate uses her physical attractiveness to further confuse Densher and make him put aside his moral tremblings.

There are different battles for possession taking place in The Wings of the Dove. As stated before, most of the characters are concerned with the possession of money. In order to possess money, several characters attempt to possess other people. Maud, who possesses money,

requires the possession of a person before money will be given. Milly is thrown into the middle of the situation and somehow comes out of it, having reversed all the values of the corrupt society of her new friends. Possession for Kate and Densher is seen several times to be sexual, but Kate relinquishes her sexual possession of Densher, or is willing to, when she succumbs and makes money the goal to attain. Millicent Bell comments on Kate's capacity to send her lover to another woman, knowing full well that a marriage would entail sexual consummation. Bell sees a parallel between Milly and Verena Tarrant in The Bostonians. Bell goes on to suggest a similarity between Olive Chancellor and Kate. Olive is a woman, quite probably a lesbian, who is in competition with Basil Ransom for possession of Verena. The interpretation is that Kate, who cannot possess Milly herself, sends someone she possesses to gain control of Milly. This is a possible explanation although in Kate's case the emphasis is very much on the money. In The Bostonians the financial situations of the characters are different: Verena and Ransom are poor; while Olive is rich. Bell notes the emphasis on money and gives it as the reason for Kate's lack of jealousy.

> The perversity which interested James in The Wings of the Dove was the replacement of love by a commercialism of the emotions. It is this process active within "normal sex," which thins to abstractness the relations of Kate and Densher and rules out the uneconomic emotion of jealousy.[6]

It is interesting to note that Kate who is the least likely to become jealous has the most reason to; the possibility of Densher's loving Milly is real. Densher, ironically, who is jealous of Lord Mark, has the least to fear, as far as Kate's turning to another man is concerned. Densher is the man Kate loves and is her link to money. Marriage to Lord Mark

would mean funds from Aunt Maud, but Lord Mark does not interest Kate in the least.

Densher's recurring plea to Kate to drop the plan and marry him without the money echoes Olive Chancellor's cry to Verena: "If they were all in all to each other, what more could they want? They would be isolated but they would be free."[7] Densher not only wants to be isolated with Kate, but he recognizes that unless they do drop their scheme something terrible will happen. It is already beginning when Kate refuses to marry him without money.

The sexual implications in The Bostonians are much stronger, I think, than in The Wings of the Dove. In the latter novel sex, like honour and love, is perverted to become a means to the end of money. The theme of possession switches from that of possession of people in The Bostonians to possession of people in order to possess money in The Wings of the Dove.

Milly, the dove, ends possessing nothing--love is unreturned she believes, she does not experience sex, and her material possessions bring her no comfort ultimately. Her attempt to insulate herself by renting the Palazzo Leporelli proves a failure; the outside world intrudes in the guise of Lord Mark who shatters Milly's illusions about Kate and Densher. Milly's attempt to buy security from the world is like Gertrude's in "Poor Richard", but Milly's attempt has to fail. She believes it will succeed. She tells Lord Mark "that if one only had such a house for one's own and loved it and cherished it enough, it would pay one back in kind, would close one in from harm" (II, p. 159). As in The Portrait of a Lady where place is very important, so it is in The Wings of the Dove; Gardencourt, the Touchett family home, is seen by Isabel as

a place of love and security. Milly believes her home will protect her. Ironically, it is Lord Mark who breaks the illusion of security by bringing the news of Kate and Densher's engagement. Just as Isabel learns that place does not afford real security, so does Milly. Isabel leaves Gardencourt to return to Osmond in Rome, but Milly begins in earnest the process of dying.

Milly becomes the centre of the society in London because of her money and youth; she remains in the centre of Densher's mind because of her morality. Her honesty, goodness, and truthfulness transcend her money and Densher finally realizes he loves Milly when it is too late.

The symbols associated with Milly, the dove and the princess, are both given form by Kate. First Kate tells Milly she is a princess.

> She fairly got her companion to accept from her that she was quite the nearest approach to a practical princess Bayswater could hope ever to know. It was a fact--it became one at the end of three days--that Milly actually began to borrow from the handsome girl a sort of view of her state; the handsome girl's impression was a tribute, a tribute positively to power, power the source of which was the last thing Kate treated as a mystery. (I, p. 175)

The picture of Milly as a princess is also presented by Susan Stringham, but it has not the effect that Kate's picture has.

> That a princess could only be a princess was a truth with which, essentially, a confidant, however responsive, had to live. Mrs. Stringham was a woman of the world, but Milly Theale was a princess, the only one she had yet had to deal with, and this, in its way, made all the difference. (I, 120)

Kate's influence on Milly is shown again when Kate tells Milly she is a dove. Milly has been told by Kate that she may "loathe" Kate yet and asks why Kate says such things to her. Kate's reply, "'Because you're a dove'" (I, p. 283), is immediately accepted by Milly.

> It was moreover, for the girl, like an inspiration: she found herself accepting as the right one, while she caught her breath with relief, the name so given her. She met it on the instant as she would have met revealed truth; it lighted up the strange dusk in which she lately had walked. That was what was the matter with her. She was a dove. (I, p. 283)

Not only does Milly accept the idea of herself as a dove but she begins to pattern her behavior by what she thinks a dove would do. The controlling symbol of the dove gains strength because of the recognition given it by the characters. Milly's first encounter is with Maud Lowder. She informs Mrs. Lowder that Densher has not returned after Mrs. Lowder has spoken to her almost like "a dove cooing to a dove" (I, p. 284).

> Milly's answer had prepared itself while Aunt Maud was on the stair; she had felt in a rush all the reasons that would make it the most dove-like; and she gave it, while she was about it, as earnest, as candid. "I don't think, dear lady, he's here."
>
> It gave her straightaway the measure of the success she could have as a dove: that was recorded in the long look of deep criticism, a look without a word, that Mrs. Lowder poured forth. (I, p. 284)

Lotus Snow points out that the image of the dove is used only four times in the novel. The first is when Kate names Milly; the second is when Kate thinks of Milly as a dove at her party but the picture Kate sees is the appearance of the dove, the beauty and splendour that wealth provide; the third time is when Mrs. Lowder refers to Milly's death: "'Our dear dove then, as Kate calls her, has folded her wonderful wings'" (II, p. 356), and the fourth is when Kate refers to the effect of Milly's wings after her death. The second instance of the dove image shows Kate's declining morality. Kate remarks on Milly's pearls, her appearance, not what she is. Snow says, "this time, so far has greed debased Kate, she does not mean Milly's innocence but her wealth."[8] When Mrs. Lowder refers to Milly as a dove Densher becomes upset because what she sees are

Milly's wings spreading money; what he sees are Milly's wings spreading love.

> "Our dear dove then, as Kate calls her, has folded her wonderful wings."
>
> "Yes--folded them."
>
> It rather racked him, but he tried to receive it as she intended, and she evidently took his formal assent for self-control. "Unless, it's more true," she accordingly added, "that she has spread them the wider."
>
> He again but formally assented, though, strangely enough, the words fitted a figure deep in his own imagination. "Rather, yes--spread them the wider."
>
> "For a flight, I trust, to some happiness greater--!"
>
> "Exactly. Greater," Densher broke in; but now with a look, he feared, that did a little warn her off. (II, p. 356)

Densher does not believe that Milly has gone to a greater happiness. He understands how unhappy she was by the apparent loss of the possibility of love in life. All Milly wanted was to live; this was taken away from her by human cruelty.

Although the dove image is used infrequently, it is pervasive because the other imagery associated with Milly is homogeneous or complementary. The dove, as the symbol of innocence and truth, is re-inforced by other Christian images particularly names. James always took care with the naming of his characters: Susan Shepherd Stringham and Sir Luke Strett reinforce the Christian imagery.

Merton Densher elevates Milly to a Christ-figure while he is in London waiting for news of her death. "Suspense was the ugliest ache to him, and he would have nothing to do with it; the last thing he wished was to be unconscious of her--what he wished to ignore was her own consciousness, tortured for all he knew, crucified by its pain" (II, p. 339). Densher and Kate have known for a while that he is in love with Milly; neither knows to what extent Milly will affect them. Her

effect is greater than they could imagine; it makes their relationship impossible because it has changed elements in the relationship. Densher has been able to see what Kate is, over and over. A particularly good example of Kate's greed and cunning is her reaction to the letters Densher receives and gives to her. She throws Milly's letter unopened into the fire; she is sure of what it will say. The letter Densher forward to her from Milly's attorneys is immediately opened. Densher had hoped that they would return this letter, unopened to New York, a sign of their rejection of the money. But Kate opens it.

Milly's effect on Densher and Kate is devastating. John Carlos Rowe believes that: "In a sense Milly's entire sacrifice forces all the characters into a consciousness of time and discourse as the only co-ordinates of their reality. Her death shatters all systems of order and meaning which attempt to delimit and confine the change and movement of consciousness itself."[9] The systems that Milly's death have shattered (at least for Densher) are corrupt systems of a corrupt society. As J. A. Ward says, "In a society in which the only reality is money, traditional forms of intercourse--which should ideally reflect honor, sincerity, and intelligence--are necessarily false and hollow, and yet they constitute the last barrier against barbarism."[10] Densher and Kate become aware of time: they are not now what they once were. Yet reality must surely be the understanding of one's moral being. Being does not end with death as Milly illustrates. She survives to some degree in Densher because she has saved him. The real love Milly has for Densher bridges the gap between the world of possessions and the world of acquisition and shatters both worlds. The Wings of the Dove shows a progression in theme from The Portrait of a Lady. Isabel comes to self-knowledge at the expense of

nearly everything else; Milly comes to self-knowledge and an awareness of the world and although she dies, her gift of truth and love is passed on to Merton Densher.

The Wings of the Dove takes the theme of failed potential and broadens it. Milly fails to achieve a happy life but more than Isabel she has an effect on those around her. The symbol of the dove spreading its wings is also larger than the symbol of the portrait. The portrait represents Isabel, while the dove represents Milly. The dove's wings, or Milly's effect, cover the people Milly leaves behind, notably Kate and Densher, and change their lives. Isabel does not have such an effect on anyone else. Compared to The Portrait of a Lady, The Wings of the Dove explores a new angle of the theme of failure, and uses a controlling symbol in an expanded form.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE GOLDEN BOWL

The Golden Bowl is James's final novel about the marriage of a rich young woman. It contains elements of both The Portrait of a Lady and The Wings of the Dove. It shows another facet of the theme of failed potential in that the possibility of success is indicated. This novel also shows a development in the use of a controlling symbol. The symbol is the golden bowl and its importance as a symbol is intensified because it is also an object in the novel.

I will begin by briefly showing the similarities between The Golden Bowl and its predecessors: The Portrait of a Lady and The Wings of the Dove. The reasons for Maggie's imminent failure will then be examined, followed by a discussion of the use of the bowl as a controlling symbol and its relationship to the theme. The critical commentary on The Golden Bowl will also be examined briefly.

There are many similarities between The Golden Bowl, The Portrait of a Lady and The Wings of the Dove. The number of characters is limited in the later novel but the plot follows the general pattern set by the two earlier novels. Maggie Verver, a young American woman, is living in England with her wealthy father, Adam. At the beginning of the novel, Maggie is about to be married to Prince Amerigo, a relatively poor Italian. Like Isabel and Milly, Maggie has a great potential for happiness but she faces a similar problem: apparent friends are actually trying to deceive her. In Maggie's case it is her husband and her best

friend Charlotte who also becomes Adam's wife. Maggie learns that Charlotte and the Prince are having an affair. Like Isabel, Maggie is unable initially to discriminate between appearance and reality[1] and does not know how to use social conventions. Maggie, like Isabel, does learn to delve beneath surfaces but Maggie also learns how to use social conventions to make appearance and reality coincide in her marriage.

Like Milly Theale, Maggie has a great effect on people around her. The Prince abandons his affair with Charlotte to return to his wife. This return could be compared to Densher's switch from loving Kate to loving Milly. Maggie is able to take advantage of the effect her actions have, whereas Milly is not.

A major difference between the three novels is the moral culpability of the main characters. All the main characters in The Golden Bowl are morally reprehensible, even Maggie. Milly's superior morality is not questioned and it is clear that Isabel, for all her mistakes, was morally earnest. The case is not so clear with Maggie Verver, who, ironically, is the one heroine of the three who goes beyond failure to possible success.

The reasons for Maggie's possible failure are, like those of the previous heroines', both internal and external. The external reason is the same: a deception or plot by apparent friends. The internal reason, the same as in Isabel's case, is the failure to understand social conventions, a failure which leads to a lack of discrimination between appearance and reality. Maggie's excessive concern for her father compared to the concern she has for her husband is the manifestation of her inability to distinguish between appearance and reality. Maggie's marriage appears to be successful but as she spends more and more time

with her father and less with her husband the reality is quite different. Maggie perhaps never realizes how responsible she is for creating an environment conducive to the affair. But once she suspects that something is wrong in her marriage she begins to try to use manners and appearance to rectify her marriage.

The external reason for Maggie's imminent failure, the affair between Charlotte and the Prince, is very much connected to the internal reason. Both depend on social conventions and appearances. The affair is conducted only because the Prince believes that the appearance of a successful marriage will be maintained.

The Prince pursues and wins Maggie because she is rich and will give him the kind of life he wants. He does not want to jeopardize what he has worked so hard for. The Prince knows that he is bought by Adam Verver for his daughter. He and Maggie even joke about his being a "morceau de musée,"[2] but the Prince is also determined to give value for Adam Verver's investment. "If there was one thing in the world the young man, at this juncture, clearly intended, it was to be much more decent as a son-in-law than lots of fellows he could think of had shown themselves in that character" (I. pp. 4-5). The Prince wins the Verver fortune but must relinquish his freedom in return. He is very clear that he set out to charm Maggie and her father and thus gain the money.

> He had been pursuing for six months as never in his life before, and what had actually unsteadied him, as we join him, was the sense of how he had been justified. Capture had crowned the pursuit--or success, as he would otherwise have put it, had rewarded virtue; whereby the consciousness of these things made him for the hour rather serious than gay. (I, p. 4)

The Prince also knows that along with the financial freedom the money gives comes the forfeiting of personal freedom. "What had happened was

that shortly before, at three o'clock, his fate had practically been sealed, and that even when one pretended to no quarrel with it the moment had something of the grimness of a crunched key in the strongest lock that could be made" (I, pp. 4-5). Like Gilbert Osmond's vision of Isabel and himself as the candle and the snuffer, the Prince's vision of married life is no less restrictive. On one hand, the Verver wealth will free the Prince from financial considerations; on the other, it will bind him to that wealth.

Although the Prince wants to keep his part of the bargain, it appears that Maggie does not. She treats her father more like a husband, spending all her time with him and her son, the Principino. The Prince is disturbed but does not know what to do. He is finally convinced by Charlotte that an affair would be safe. Charlotte goes so far as to tell the Prince that they have no choice: "'It makes such a relation for us as, I verily believe, was never before in the world thrust upon two well-meaning creatures. Haven't we therefore to take things as we find them? . . . What else can we do, what in all the world else?'" (I, p. 303). Charlotte tries to shift the responsibility for her actions to Maggie and Adam. It is true that Charlotte and the Prince are in a difficult position: Maggie and Adam prefer each other's company to that of their spouses. But it is clear that the Prince's and Charlotte's actions are not to be condoned or excused: they may be understood, but the actions are still wrong.

Morally, the Prince and Charlotte differ. Charlotte pursues the Prince because she has convinced herself that not only is it a safe thing to do but that it is a proper and fitting thing. The Prince allows himself to be pursued by Charlotte only because he thinks it is safe.

The Prince is aware that forms and manners can be used as a weapon, because they mask reality. For Charlotte, the appearance is the reality. When the Prince has tea with Fanny Assingham just before his wedding we learn that he sees the forms of behavior as a kind of deception. "It fairly befell at last for a climax that they almost ceased to pretend--to pretend, that is, to cheat each other with forms" (I, p. 33). In actions the Prince is as guilty as Charlotte but at least he is aware of the enormity of his wrong-doing.

The Prince is concerned about flaws that are not apparent in his own character. He recognizes his own flaw and has hinted to Maggie of its existence. Part of what makes the Prince attractive, and, in fact, a Prince, is his history, but this also masks the Prince's individuality. Before they are married the Prince tells Maggie:

> There are two parts of me. . . . One is made up of the history, the doings, the marriages, the crimes, the follies, the boundless betises of other people--especially of their infamous waste of money that might have come to me. Those things are written--literally in rows of volumes in libraries; are as public as they're abominable. Everybody can get at them, and you've both of you looked them wonderfully in the face. But there's another part, very much smaller doubtless, which, such as it is represents my single self, the unknown, unimportant--unimportant save to you--personal quality. About this you've found out nothing. (I, p. 9)

Maggie replies that if she knew all about the Prince she would not have an occupation for the future. Maggie's future, as it happens, is to learn about the Prince and about herself, but at this point she has no idea that what she will learn is unpleasant.

The Prince shares his concern about his flaw with Fanny Assingham but she does not take him seriously. The Prince tells her that he is worried about "being 'off' some day, of being wrong, without knowing

it. That's just what I shall always trust you for--to tell me when I am. No--with you people it's a sense. We haven't got it--not as you have'" (I, p. 30). Mrs. Assingham remarks that she cannot imagine any sense the Prince lacks and he makes it clear that he is worried about his lack of a moral sense: "'Your moral sense works by steam--it sends you up like a rocket. Ours is slow and steep and unlighted, with so many of the steps missing that--well, that it's as short in almost any case to turn around and come down again'" (I, p. 31). The Prince knows that he lacks a moral sense and also thinks that the Ververs and Mrs. Assingham, because they are American, have it in abundance. What fills the Prince's moral void is his meticulous consideration of manners and appearances.

Charlotte and the Prince may be compared to Osmond and Madame Merle or Kate Croy and Densher. Charlotte, like Osmond and Kate, is a creature of appearances. She knows how to dress, how to behave, how to appear to be the perfect lady but under the appearance is an immoral person. Osmond, Kate and Charlotte are to be criticized because for them appearances are reality. The Prince may be compared to Madame Merle and Densher. All commit a reprehensible act but all are aware of the immorality of their actions. Each understands the discrepancy between appearance and reality and comes to feel remorse for his or her part in the deception. Charlotte, Osmond and Kate are sorry only because their plans backfire. Osmond finds himself married to a woman with a mind and moral system of her own; Kate discovers she cannot have Densher and the money; Charlotte is taken to America by Adam, presumably never able to see the Prince again and never able to find out why he abandons her.

The affair is the external reason for Maggie's near failure but it is also what makes Maggie take notice of her life and what is wrong

with her marriage. Maggie needs to be shocked into seeing what is going on around her and what she can do about it. The affair exists because of Maggie's internal problem but the affair also becomes the reason for Maggie's social awakening.

Maggie's love for her father is not a problem in itself. The real problem is that she pretends to be a family with her father and son and excludes her husband. At the beginning of Book Two Maggie finally begins to realize that her life is not as it should be. Her inner turmoil is described and shows her growing awareness of the difference between appearance and reality. Ironically while Maggie is meditating on her life and deciding to change things, the Prince and Charlotte are resuming their affair in Gloucester.

Maggie's sense of unease is described pictorially. She envisions a pagoda, a much decorated structure that she does not know how to enter.

> This situation had been occupying for months and months the very centre of the garden of her life, but it had reared itself there like some strange tall tower of ivory, or perhaps rather some wonderful beautiful but outlandish pagoda, a structure plated with hard bright porcelain, coloured and figured and adorned at the overhanging eaves with silver bells that tinkled ever so charmingly when stirred by chance airs. She had walked round and round it--that was what she felt; she had carried on her existence in the space left her for circulation, a space that sometimes seemed ample and sometimes narrow: looking up all the while at the fair structure that spread itself so amply and rose so high, but never quite making out as yet where she might have entered had she wished. (II, p. 3)

At the same time that she reflects on how well her father and her husband get along and how little difference to the father-daughter relationship their marriages have made, Maggie begins to feel alone.

> That it was remarkable that they should have been at once so to separate and so to keep together had never for a moment, from however far back, been equivocal to her; that it was remarkable had in fact quite counted, at first and always, and for each of them equally, as part of their inspiration and their support. (II, p. 5)

Maggie is not completely insensitive to the situation. Although she has been, she is now beginning to see the flaws in her life. Once Maggie starts to see the truth around her, she begins to realize she has a role in the drama. Maggie questions her life by considering the form of it. Again a picture is used. Maggie imagines the two couples in a carriage.

> She might have been watching the family coach pass and noting that somehow Amerigo and Charlotte were pulling it while she and her father were not so much as pushing. They were seated inside together, dandling the Principino and holding him up to the windows to see and be seen, like an infant positively royal; so that the exertion was <u>all</u> with the others. (II, pp. 23-4)

Maggie begins to see that all is not right and that maybe her relationship with her father might have something to do with the strange form of her new life. After a long meditative vigil Maggie asks herself, "'What if I've abandoned <u>them</u>, you know? What if I've accepted too passively the funny form of our life?'" (II, p. 25). Maggie's realization that she is arranged apart from Charlotte and the Prince shocks her very much because she begins to see that she may not be the centre of importance for everyone. She has not considered what her husband is doing during the long hours she spends with her father and is selfishly surprised to discover that his life is continuing in paths separate from hers. She is with Adam when this thought strikes her and so she looks to her father for support. Adam does not understand that something has come over Maggie; consequently she feels even more isolated.

> Amerigo and Charlotte were arranged together, but she--to confine the matter only to herself--was arranged apart. It rushed over her, the full sense of all this . . . and as her father himself seemed not to meet the vaguely-clutching hand with which, during the first shock of complete perception, she tried to steady herself, so she felt very much alone. (II, p. 45)

Once Maggie recognizes her aloneness she begins to consider how and why she got that way and how she can change it. She has been taken advantage of, but she is able to regain power once she sees that she has to exert power for her own preservation. However, once Maggie realizes where she has been placed in the scheme of things she still has the scheme to contend with. Maggie's power, although very strong is not unlimited and must be used delicately. She must learn to be powerful in an already established arrangement and is confronted with the problem of rearranging four people's lives without acknowledging to her father or Charlotte that rearrangement is necessary.

Maggie does not know just how necessary a change is until she buys the golden bowl and is visited by the shop-keeper. When the shop-keeper comes to tell Maggie he has swindled her, that the bowl is cracked, her suspicions regarding her husband are confirmed. By accident the shop-keeper recognizes a picture of the family and tells Maggie that Charlotte and the Prince had looked at the bowl years before. This information is the last push Maggie needs to begin a concerted effort to change her life. Through learning of the flaw in the bowl Maggie learns of the flaw in the Prince. She also begins to question more her role in the situation.

Even more than the central symbols of The Portrait of a Lady and The Wings of the Dove, the major symbol of The Golden Bowl controls the novel very carefully. James L. Spencer says, "All that happens in

this novel is in some way brought under the governance of the primary symbol, the golden bowl."[3] The control the bowl as symbol has is heightened because of the control the bowl as object has and vice versa. The bowl is a key to the relationship between Charlotte and the Prince. It is also a key to the relation between the Prince and Maggie and the bowl quite clearly symbolizes the Prince.

The bowl is gilded crystal. It is small, rather like a large cup, and sits on a pedestal. There is a crack in the crystal that is not immediately apparent. The two appearances of this small object are what moves the plot and shows the conflict. As Spencer remarks, "The function of the bowl as the dramatic as well as the symbolic center of the novel can be seen in the fact that the general state of tension is reinforced with each appearance of the bowl."[4] The first appearance of the bowl shows the problem to the reader, while the second appearance shows the problem to Maggie.

The bowl first appears shortly before the wedding of Maggie and the Prince. Charlotte arrives from America, ostensibly for the wedding, but actually she wants to see the Prince alone before his wedding. She arranges for them to go on a shopping expedition so Charlotte can get a wedding gift for the Prince and Maggie. They find nothing suitable until they are shown the golden bowl. Charlotte is captivated by the bowl but cannot afford to buy it. The Prince has no interest in it at all because he has seen that it is flawed. He says to Charlotte after they leave the shop, "'I hope you satisfied yourself, before you had done, of what was the matter with the bowl'" (I, p. 118). Charlotte has not; she has declined to buy it only because of its price. The Prince refers to the shop-keeper as a rascal but Charlotte still does not understand that the

is flawed. She says the price was moderate and, at this point, lies to the Prince by saying the price was five pounds, ten pounds less than the quoted price. The Prince is outraged. He tells Charlotte the bowl has a crack and that receiving a cracked bowl would be a bad omen for his marriage.

Although Adam does not know of the bowl, he does have a conversation with the Prince in which the central symbol is alluded to. Adam expresses his thought that the Prince is very easy to live with, that he is a "'pure and perfect crystal'" (I, p. 138). The Prince theorizes to himself on the difference between the American, Adam, and the European, himself.

> His "curves" apparently were important because they had been unexpected, or, still more, unconceived; whereas when one had always, as in his relegated old world, taken curves, and in much greater quantities too, for granted, one was no more surprised at the resulting feasibility of intercourse than one was surprised at being upstairs in a house that had a staircase. (I, p. 139)

The Prince finds it unusual that any one should wonder about getting along with other people. He believes that if forms and manners are followed there is no possibility of conflict. What the Prince says to Adam reminds the reader of the golden bowl and its symbolic value. "'Oh, if I'm a crystal I'm delighted that I'm a perfect one for I believe they sometimes have cracks and flaws--in which case they're to be had very cheap'" (I, p. 139). At this point the Prince and Maggie have been married for nearly two years. Adam Verver is unmarried and Charlotte has not yet returned from America to rescue him from Mrs. Rance.

Whether or not the Prince actually has remembered the bowl is unclear. His words to Adam make recollection appear plausible, or at

least the sense that the Prince has unconsciously stored the memory is strong. However, the next time the bowl is mentioned the Prince, who actually initiates the subject, must be prompted by Charlotte to remember the golden bowl. When the Prince and Charlotte are at Matcham the Prince does not realize that Charlotte has a plan so that they can spend the day together alone. Charlotte and the Prince are the last house guests to leave Matcham so they can provide not only a cover for Lady Castledean and Mr. Blint, but also for themselves. Charlotte is the organizing force at this point; the Prince seems almost naive in his lack of recognition of what both women, Charlotte and Lady Castledean, are so blunt about. Before he knows of Charlotte's arrangements the Prince laments that they cannot spend more time together. He says,"'I feel the day like a great gold cup that we must somehow drain together'"(I, p. 359). This immediately reminds Charlotte of the golden bowl. She remembers it as beautiful, forgetting the flaw.

> "But do you remember," she asked, "apropos of great gold cups, the beautiful one, the real one, that I offered you so long ago and that you wouldn't have? Just before your marriage"--she brought it back to him: "the gilded crystal bowl in the little Bloomsbury shop." (I, p. 359)

Charlotte still thinks of the bowl as a beautiful object. She does not seem to remember that it was flawed and that the flaw made the Prince nervous. For Charlotte the appearance of the bowl supercedes what she knows about its inner construction. Like the bowl, Charlotte is flawed. She does not have a moral sense, but unlike the Prince she does not even realize that she has a flaw. The Prince's memory is jogged by Charlotte's reminiscence and his recollection of the bowl is qualitatively different from Charlotte's.

> "Oh yes!"--but it took, with a slight surprise on the Prince's part, some small recollecting. "The treacherous cracked thing you wanted to palm off on me, and the little swindling Jew who understood Italian and who backed you up! But I feel this an occasion," he immediately added, "and I hope you don't mean," he smiled, "that as an occasion it's also cracked." (I, p. 359)

The Prince's words regarding the bowl are in direct contrast to Charlotte's. Charlotte remembers the appearance of the bowl, while the Prince remembers its essential flaw. The Prince passes judgement not only on the bowl ("the treacherous cracked thing"), but also on the shop-keeper ("the little swindling Jew") and on Charlotte whom he describes as having tried to "palm off" the bowl on him. The passage illustrates that although the Prince may lack a moral sense, he does have a system of judgement. The Prince's system is mainly aesthetic. The bowl is flawed and therefore it is treacherous; the shop-keeper is trying to sell a flawed object, therefore he is a swindling Jew; and Charlotte by not seeing the flaw in the bowl becomes an agent of fraud. The Prince's words are very harsh and condemnatory.

The differences between the Prince and Charlotte are made clear by their differing attitudes to the bowl. The Prince's fear of cracks seems to be excessive to Charlotte. "'Don't you think too much of "cracks" and aren't you too afraid of them? I risk the cracks,' said Charlotte, 'and I've often recalled the bowl and the little swindling Jew, wondering if they've parted company. He made,' she said, 'a great impression on me'" (I, p. 359). It is interesting that Charlotte repeats the Prince's description of the shop-keeper. There was no hint of animosity in her description of the bowl, until the Prince burst out with his attack. She still does not realize that for the Prince the cracks are very important. He tries to make clear his position to her.

> "Well you also, no doubt, made a great impression on him, and I dare say that if you were to go back to him you'd find that he'd been keeping that treasure for you. But as to cracks," the Prince went on--"what did you tell me the other day you prettily called them in English? 'rifts within the lute'?--risk them as much as you like for yourself, but don't risk them for me." He spoke it in all the gaiety of his just barely-tremulous serenity. "I go, as you know, by my superstitions. And that's why," he said, "I know where we are. They're every one to day on our side." (I, pp. 359-360)

Charlott'e gamble must be hers alone, says the Prince. After Charlotte explains her plan to the Prince, he realizes that there is little risk in their spending the day together and acquiesces to her desires.

The second appearance of the bowl is several years after the first. Maggie buys the bowl as a birthday present for her father. Like Charlotte Maggie fails to see the flaw in the bowl. Maggie must be told of the flaw by the shop-keeper and as already mentioned the shop-keeper reveals to Maggie not only the flaw in the bowl but also the flaw in her marriage. She buys the flawed bowl just as she married the flawed Prince. James L. Spencer says, "Maggie does not know about the Prince's lack of moral sense; and this is symbolized by her ignorance of the flaw in the bowl. The Prince does know about his shortcomings in the moral sphere, however, just as he knows about the flaw in the bowl."[5]

Maggie summons Fanny Assingham after the shop-keeper leaves her. She behaves with remarkable calm; she wants to find out what Fanny knows before she does anything regarding the Prince. She knows that something has gone on between the Prince and Charlotte in the past but she is still not sure about the present. Through the long conversation with Maggie, Fanny manages to hide her own guilt and forces Maggie to consider that some of the blame may lay with her.

"Then it's a good deal my fault--if everything really began so well?"

Fanny Assingham met it as she could. "You've been only too perfect. You've thought only too much--"

But the Princess had already caught at the words. "Yes--I've thought only too much!" Yet she appeared to continue for the minute full of that fault. She had it in fact, by this prompted thought, all before her. "Of him, dear man, of him--!"

Her friend, able to take in thus directly her vision of her father, watched her with a new suspense. That way might safety lie--it was like a wider chink of light. "He believed--with a beauty!--in Charlotte."

"Yes, and it was I who had made him believe. I didn't mean to at the time so much, for I had no idea then of what was coming. But I did it, I did it!" the Princess declared.

"With a beauty--ah with a beauty you too!" Mrs. Assingham insisted.

Maggie at all events was seeing for herself--it was another matter. "The thing was that he made her think it would be so possible."

Fanny again hesitated. "The Prince made her think--?"

Maggie stared--she had meant her father. But her vision seemed to spread. "They both made her think. She wouldn't have thought without them." (II, pp. 172-173)

Maggie is obsessed by what her father thinks and by how far he has gone in his protection of her. Ironically, the bowl meant for his birthday gift is also the material evidence that could destroy both marriages. For Maggie the bowl's importance lies in the knowledge she has gained through contact with it. For Fanny the bowl is a concrete reminder of her own lack of honesty and the agent for the destruction of her arrangements. She thinks that by destroying the bowl she will destroy its threat. Her concern for appearances is so strong that she does not consider underlying realities.

For Maggie, the bowl as object is unimportant. She has overpaid for a flawed object but it provides her with the means to delve into herself and her personal relationships more than she has ever done before. Literally the smashing of the bowl represents the smashing of appearances for Fanny. For Maggie the breaking of the bowl is the figurative smashing

of appearances. She knows that the bowl is flawed and not what it appears to be, just as she now knows the Prince is not what he appears to be.

Maggie's reaction to the whole episode including the Prince's witnessing the breaking of the bowl indicates her growing awareness of the society she lives in. Charlotte's and the Prince's careful consideration of forms or manners has not been lost on Maggie. She begins to see that in order to win the Prince she must become more skilled at the game than the other players. She must begin to use appearance to combat appearance. Maggie must confront her own internal problem and turn it to use against the external problem, the affair.

The breaking of the bowl can symbolize Maggie's loss of innocence, a necessary loss. At some point in a Jamesian character's development, innocence becomes less a desired trait and more of a liability. Maggie's innocence is a prime example of this, although to some extent all the main characters in The Golden Bowl experience a loss of innocence. The mistakes the other characters make regarding Maggie's character show that everyone in the novel has something to learn. One of the most serious mistakes Maggie's family and friends make is to protect her from the knowledge of evil. Fanny Assingham says of Maggie that "'she wasn't born to know evil. She must never know it'"(I, p. 78). Fanny's protection of Maggie is intertwined with her regard for appearances. Maggie appears to be an innocent naive girl who should not be touched by the ugliness of life. Therefore Fanny tries to shield her by not telling her about the Prince and Charlotte. However, even Fanny begins to realize that Maggie's vision must expand. She tells her husband: "'Her sense will have to open. . . . To what's called Evil--with a very big E:

for the first time in her life. . . . It will make her . . . understand one or two things in the world'" (I, pp. 384-385).

Knowledge of the bowl's flaw becomes the way to knowledge of evil. The breaking of the bowl, which is Fanny's attempt to destroy evidence, symbolizes that for Maggie appearances have been shattered. Maggie realizes that her life has changed because of the knowledge gained through the golden bowl and that she must do something to fix her life and the lives around her. The tenuous arrangement of the two couples has been disrupted and the pleasant form of the four lives has been irretrievably lost for Maggie. Her task becomes the preservation of a form of peace so that Adam does not find out about Charlotte and the Prince or at least that he never discovers that Maggie knows. She also wants Charlotte to know that things have changed but without knowing why.

Maggie's partial control over the situation is symbolized by her attempt to fit the pieces of the bowl together. She carries two of the pieces to the mantle and then follows with the foot of the bowl. Once collected on the mantle, the pieces are held together by Maggie.

> The split determined by the latent crack was so sharp and so neat that if there had been anything to hold them the bowl might still quite beautifully, a few steps away, have passed for uninjured. As there was however nothing to hold them but Maggie's hands during the few moments the latter were so employed, she could only lay the almost equal parts of the vessel carefully beside their pedestal and leave them thus before her husband's eyes. (II, pp. 182-183)

Maggie cannot devote her existence to holding the pieces of the relationship together. Otherwise she would remain as static as she was when holding together the pieces of the golden bowl. In order for the situation to be resolved the Prince must help Maggie in holding together the pieces of their marriage. It is very important to Maggie that the

Prince should do so in the same way that Maggie holds the golden bowl together--silently and carefully so the crack does not show. For the marriage to work, both husband and wife must be involved in the resolution of the problem.

Although there are four main characters in the novel it is significant that the bowl breaks into three pieces, the two halves of the bowl and the pedestal. The predominant figure in the novel is the triangle of which there are three important ones, all including Maggie. They are: Maggie, the Prince and Charlotte; Maggie, Charlotte and Adam; and Maggie, the Prince and Adam. Maggie is the central character in the novel; she plays a role in each of the triangular relationships. The focus of the novel is on the interaction of the characters with Maggie at the centre.

Maggie's growing awareness and sensitivity is shown by her mention of the bowl to Fanny after the bowl has been broken. Unlike Charlotte's memory of the bowl, Maggie's is very clear. She tells Fanny:

> "I want a happiness without a hole in it big enough for you to poke in your finger."
>
> "A brilliant perfect surface--to begin with at least. I see."
>
> "The golden bowl--as it was to have been." And Maggie dwelt musingly on this obscured figure. "The bowl with all our happiness in it. The bowl without the crack." (II, p. 216)

The bowl becomes a symbol for Maggie. What she must learn about life is what she has learned about the bowl. A perfect surface can mask an imperfect interior.

Joseph Ward comments on Maggie's inability to distinguish between appearance and reality, but he uses the ideas of form and content.

> To both Maggie and her father, the content of marriage is the same as its form. Paradoxically this fallacy springs not from an exaggeration of the importance of form, but from a total ignorance of form. . . . But their gravest mistake is their notion that form can be somehow possessed, even bought, without its being allowed to interfere with one's life.[6]

Ward goes on to explain why Maggie is successful in winning back the Prince:

> Her method rather than her objective wins over the Prince. Her love is manifested in her force of will and her ruthlessness; it depends upon the intellectual qualities of self-awareness and insight into the motives of others. In practice, this amounts to an ability to read appearances correctly . . . and, secondly, to an ability to preserve them even as she wrenches her husband from Charlotte.[7]

Maggie overcomes the external problem because she learns to look at her situation and how to manipulate it. As Ward points out Maggie learns to see appearances for what they are and she learns to use appearances to her advantage.

The title of Walter Wright's article, "Maggie Verver: Neither Saint Nor Witch," shows the extremes to which Jamesian critics have gone in the pursuit of the meaning of the novel. Wright shows the invalidity of the two opposite strains of thought about Maggie. Viewing Maggie as a saint, says Wright, as for example Quentin Anderson, R. P. Blackmur, and Dorothea Krook do, reduces the impact of the novel and does not coincide with what is actually in the novel: "There would be no justification of long passages on her own mental conflict if Maggie merely confronted evil in another person. Such an interpretation makes the novel a simple religious romance or even an allegory; it has no place for a psychological flaw in the heroine--a flaw that might bring tragedy."[8] Another group of critics including Philip Rahv and C. B. Cox see Maggie as achieving a deserved success because she has been wronged. Wright believes that

"[s]uch an explication, based on the secular myth of poetic justice, the triumph of virtue in worldly affairs, likewise reduces the novel to a contest in which the heroine fights against external evil."[9] James is seldom that simple.

In reaction to the saint theory, Joseph Firebaugh sees Maggie as a witch, a woman who wants to possess and control. As Wright notes, "the evidence can be quoted, provided that one ignores all else, and, above all, provided that one considers Maggie, as in each of the two other interpretations, as a static creature and forgets the important fact that in a Jamesian story we are never finished on any point until the last line."[10] The end of the novel will be discussed in detail but first I would like to present a few more critical theories regarding Maggie.

Ronald Wallace in Henry James and the Comic Form explores the idea of comedy as an affirmation of life and he believes The Golden Bowl fits this category.

> The comic sense of life is one that constantly tries to expose life's imperfections and ugliness, not with the object of condemning life, but with the object of expressing it and making it acceptable. James's vision is of the possible fusion of life and art, of freedom and form, of the limitation and potential of man.[11]

Specifically regarding Maggie, Wallace says: "With the powers of evil seemingly set against her, Maggie heroically grows from innocence into an awareness of the possibilities of love and manners, the fusion of feeling and form."[12] Wallace also believes that Maggie "is a fool as well. Her social triumph does not obscure her failure through much of the novel to gain full self-awareness. She fails to perceive that she herself is a major cause of the original evil situation."[13] How much Maggie is aware

of her own culpability is questionable. There is not a lot of evidence in the novel to show that Maggie realizes that she is at fault. When she says to Fanny: "'Then it's a good deal my fault--if everything really began so well?'" (II, p. 172) she is asking a question. Maggie learns that her marriage did not begin so well: her husband loved another woman. What Maggie does begin to do is see the relationships of the people around her as distinct from herself. She realizes she must not take her marriage for granted and that she may have to give up some of her ideas regarding her life.

As Wallace states Maggie does grow "from innocence into an awareness of the possibilities of love and manners, the fusion of feeling and form"[14] but one must be very careful to remember that it is only an awareness of the possibilities. The way Maggie wins the Prince back is to descend to the kind of action surrounding her. Daniel J. Schneider says, "Maggie plays the world's game to cheat the world of its fraudulent triumphs."[15] Maggie learns about evil in her society and cleverly twists the forms the society runs by to her own use. Schneider believes that Maggie is the sole person in the novel with a moral sensibility.

> Maggie Verver may be guilty of many things; yet even when we have acknowledged her selfishness and her desire to have everything of her own terms, we must recognize that she alone in The Golden Bowl has what may be called a sense of sin; she alone strives to break free from the cage of brute appetite and of gilded appearances; she alone accepts responsibility while the others repeatedly disclaim it; she alone has not only "imagination of the states of others" but also when she recognizes the evil she has caused, the desire to undo that evil and to serve "love."[16]

It is impossible to find clear evidence in the novel to support Schneider's claim. Maggie and Adam, at their last meeting, discuss Charlotte and the Prince as acquisitions. At the beginning of the novel,

Maggie has referred to the Prince as a morceau de musée (I, p. 12). Adam has referred to Charlotte as a convenience and Maggie has agreed with him.

> "Whenever one corners Charlotte," he had developed more at his ease, "one finds that she only wants to know what we want. Which is what we got her for!"
>
> "What we got her for--exactly." (II, p. 94)

Adam and Maggie do not change their opinion of their spouses. Through Maggie's manipulations the marriages have been restored but Adam and Maggie still think of Charlotte and the Prince as things.

> Mrs. Verver and the Prince fairly "placed" themselves, however unwittingly, as high expressions of the kind of human furniture required aesthetically by such a scene. The fusion of their presence with the decorative elements, their contribution to the triumph of selection, was complete and admirable; though to a lingering view, a view more penetrating than the occasion really demanded, they also might have figured as concrete attestations of a rare power of purchase. There was much indeed in the tone in which Adam Verver spoke again, and who shall say where his thought stopped? "Le compte y est. You've got some good things."
>
> Maggie met it afresh--"Ah don't they look well?" Their companions, at the sound of this, gave them, in a spacious intermission of slow talk, an attention, all of gravity, that was like an ampler submission to the general duty of magnificence; sitting as still, to be thus appraised, as a pair of effigies of the contemporary great on one of the platforms of Madame Tussaud. (II, pp. 360-361)

This passage demonstrates love of possession and acquisition and even a love of aesthetics but there is no hint of basic human love. Brian Lee tries to justify Maggie's actions.

> In the magnificent scene at Fawns where Maggie turns the tables on Charlotte, James shows that he is fully aware of the deceitful and cruel-seeming methods employed by Maggie. The justification being of course that all her manipulation serves a noble end; namely the promotion of Good. If we are to criticize James it must be for flaws in his moral system, not for the novel's construction, for the boundless good faith and optimism so deeply rooted that no experience can really penetrate to them.[17]

The Golden Bowl does not appear to be full of "boundless good faith and optimism." Instead, a close reading of the end of the novel shows a certain amount of pessimism.

The second last chapter is laden with prison imagery. The Prince, as we have seen at the beginning of the novel, views marriage as a kind of imprisonment. In the second last chapter Maggie sees the Prince as being in prison,

> He struck her as caged . . . He had been turning twenty ways, for impatiences all his own, and when she was once shut in with him it was yet again as if she had come to him in his more than monastic cell to offer him light or food. There was a difference none the less between his captivity and Charlotte's --the difference, as it might be, of his lurking there by his own act and his own choice. (II, p. 338)

> He was with her as if he were hers, hers in a degree and on a scale, with an intensity and an intimacy, that were a new, and strange quantity. (II, p. 339)

> It was every moment more and more for her as if she were waiting with him in his prison. (II, p. 341)

Maggie is becoming more sympathetic to the Prince as an individual, not just as a possession. She realizes what the Prince has done to himself in marrying her and is genuinely concerned.

The power of Maggie and the Prince to harm each other is brilliantly illustrated by the closing lines of the novel. The Prince reveals that he sees nothing but Maggie: "And the truth of it had with this force after a moment so strangely lighted his eyes that as for pity and dread of them she buried her own in his breast" (II, p. 369). Maggie and the Prince have tremendous responsibilities to each other. The Prince's new interest in Maggie is so overwhelming that she must pity the power she has over him. She also must feel dread because of the very position of power in which she is placed. Maggie and the Prince are

connected by their mistakes and must learn to live out their mistakes. James ends The Golden Bowl with Maggie and the Prince embracing each other. Maggie and the Prince must make a new life for themselves. Whether this life will include love is unknown but the possibility exists. Many critics believe that Maggie and the Prince succeed through their love. Those critics who view Maggie as a saint believe that "through her perfect love she leads her husband to repent and return to the ways of virtue."[18] C. B. Cox sees Maggie as "fighting for individuality."[19] William Wasserstrom says, "Maggie is unhappy until she realizes that she must be independent and whole before she can experience love."[20] Wasserstrom tries to reconcile the saint/witch dichotomy by the force of love. "Thus, Maggie Verver, who combined the qualities of a nymph and a nun, finally recognized all antithesis; she fulfilled the American dream of love, the dream of all the ages."[21] The ending of the novel is not happy or a dream fulfilled, but it is not completely bleak either. The Prince and Maggie must begin to live a real life, not a life of appearances. The truth that Maggie sees in the Prince's eyes at the end of the novel marks the beginning of the possibility of a real marriage between the two.

David Mogen sees the broken bowl as a symbol for the future of the Prince and Maggie's marriage. He says, "the cracked bowl . . . is finally an emblem of new life, the shattered husk of a growing thing."[22] David Bleich speculates on what the unflawed bowl stands for:

> Rather than a wish for a perfect marriage, the perfect bowl is more faithfully understood--given the absence of anything more specific than "happiness"--as a wish for a perfect consciousness. . . . The Prince is brought under the aegis of Maggie's consciousness, and not, as is often claimed, of her marriage.[23]

Bleich's comment is useful because it points out one of the flaws of criticism. Bleich fails to see that Maggie's consciousness of her marriage is not separate from her marriage. James shows clearly that Maggie does not have much of a marriage until she starts to consider what it is to be married. Because of her inattention to her marriage and her husband she is in danger of living a life of appearance. Because Maggie learns to manipulate appearance the Prince begins to see that she can be more clever than Charlotte and his interest in his wife is renewed and strengthened. The Prince is willing to try and make the marriage work once Maggie begins to try also. James is not overly optimistic, but neither is he completely pessimistic. At the end of the novel Maggie has a chance for happiness, unlike James's heroines who precede her.

As has been seen The Golden Bowl has many similarities with The Portrait of a Lady and The Wings of the Dove. The reasons for Maggie's imminent failure of potential are similar to Isabel's and Milly's. The main difference is that Maggie overcomes her problems and saves her marriage. Like Isabel, Maggie learns something about herself and her place in the world. Like Milly, Maggie changes fundamentally the lives of two people close to her. Maggie accomplishes what Isabel and Milly accomplish, and more. She manages to control the situation so that appearance is maintained and so that the underlying reality more closely coincides with appearance.

James expands his use of the controlling symbol in The Golden Bowl. The controlling symbol does govern the action of the novel and the theme. It is difficult to discuss The Golden Bowl without discussing the significance of the central symbol. In this final novel on rich young women and marriages, James not only completely integrates theme and

structure, he also creates a heroine who has the possibility of meeting her potential.

CONCLUSION

The theme of failure is central to a study of Henry James, particularly an examination of rich, young, American women. Success is seldom found by James's heroines. In the early tales I have discussed only one woman who is successful in her marriage. The Countess Valeri saves her marriage but, as has been seen, she faces a very unusual problem. The tale is unrealistic and even bizarre. James has identified a human problem--the maintaining of a marriage--but does not keep it in strictly human terms. The supernatural or mystical element detracts from the work.

Several of the shorter works suffer from an infusion of the supernatural or the perverse. Besides "The Last of the Valerii," "Longstaff's Marriage" and "Madame de Mauves" are also difficult to believe. James was interested in the idea of consuming love and these tales are illustrations. However their value is debatable as the behavior of the characters is so extreme. The more successful early tales are those which explore common human folly, for example, "Poor Richard" and "Daisy Miller."

Part of the element of perversity in the early tales resurfaces in the novels, especially The Portrait of a Lady. Isabel's decisions to marry Osmond and, later, to return to him may be seen as perverse but they, unlike the decisions and actions in the early tales, are realistic given Isabel's character. Clearly, readers know Isabel in greater depth than they know the heroines of the early tales. Isabel's actions are

explained by her personality. In the earlier tales the reader must simply accept the actions of the heroine.

The greater length of a novel obviously gives an author more room in which to define character but I think that the novels in which James explores the theme of failed potential and young women demonstrate not only an increased awareness of character but of the problem of failure itself.

Failure is directly related to the main character's inability to see beneath surface reality. In the three novels I have discussed James takes the heroine's perceptions and actions in slightly different directions. The Portrait of a Lady ends when Isabel has finally learned to see correctly the world about her. Her vision has been cleared and she goes back to her husband knowing fully what he is. The Wings of the Dove ends after the reader sees the effect Milly has on Kate's and Densher's lives. The Golden Bowl ends with a heroine who has learned how to read and manipulate appearances and the consequences of her actions are displayed. Maggie not only changes lives as does Milly but she is able to take advantage of the changes made.

In addition to developing his theme, James also develops his style, particularly the use of a controlling symbol. In The Portrait of a Lady the symbol has a general force. It unifies the novel and gives it shape but as a symbol it refers only to Isabel. In The Wings of the Dove the controlling symbol is broader in effect. Milly is represented by the dove and her effect on those around her is symbolized by the spreading of the dove's wings. The controlling symbol of The Wings of the Dove becomes more encompassing than that of The Portrait of a Lady. In The Golden Bowl the importance of the controlling symbol is heightened even

more as the symbol is also an object in the novel. The bowl represents characters and relationships and it helps to control the plot and theme of the novel.

The Golden Bowl has many aspects of the earlier works. It resembles "The Last of the Valerii" and the main character Maggie faces the same problems regarding apparent reality and true reality as do Milly Theale and Isabel Archer. Like the earlier novels, The Golden Bowl uses a controlling symbol, but the symbol is more central to the theme of failure than in the previous works. The Golden Bowl may be seen not only as the culmination of the theme of failed potential but also as the culmination of James's use of a controlling symbol.

NOTES

Chapter One

[1]James, "A Day of Days," in The Complete Tales of Henry James, I, p. 139. Further references given in text.

[2]Kraft, p. 13.

[3]Kraft, p. 14.

[4]James, "Poor Richard," in The Complete Tales of Henry James, I, p. 194. Further references given in body.

[5]James, "The Last of the Valerii," in The Complete Tales of Henry James, III, p. 90. Further references given in text.

[6]James, "Madame de Mauves," in The Complete Tales of Henry James, III, p. 142. Further references given in text.

"Madame de Mauves" was one of the few early tales James chose for the New York Edition. James revised this tale as he did all the works in this Edition. I believe that James revised to clarify his original intentions. Comparison shows that there is little changed fundamentally. In the New York Edition the passage quoted is changed to:

> This agent of Providence had been irritated and mortified by Mrs. Cleve's opposition, and hardly knew how to handle an adversary who failed to perceive that a member of his family gave of necessity more than he received. But he had obtained information on his return to Paris which exalted the uses of humility. Euphemia's fortune, wonderful to say, was greater than its fame, and in view of such a prize, even a member of his family could afford to take a snubbing. (XIII, pp. 242-3)

Whenever the revision differs from the earlier text I will quote the parallel text in a note.

[7]In the New York Edition this passage is:

> She was giving him a chance to do gallantly what it seemed unworthy of both of them, that he should do meanly. She must have "liked" him indeed, as she said, to wish so to spare him, to go to the trouble of conceiving an ideal of conduct for him. (XIII, p. 315)

[8]In the New York Edition the word "apparently" is replaced by "must have" and the commas before and after "apparently" are removed.

[9]Kraft, p. 56.

[10]James, "Adina," in The Complete Tales of Henry James, III, p. 219. Further references given in body.

[11]James, "Longstaff's Marriage," in The Complete Tales of Henry James, IV, pp. 210-11. Further references given in body.

[12]Sicker, pp. 41-2.

[13]James, "An International Episode," in The Complete Tales of Henry James, IV, p. 266. This tale was also revised for the New York Edition. In this passage the only change was the addition of a hyphen in "leisure class" (XIV, pp. 304-5).

[14]In the New York Edition this passage is:

> "Lord Lambeth," said Bessie Alden," are you an hereditary legislator?"
>
> "Oh I say," cried Lord Lambeth, "don't make me call myself such names as that."
>
> "But you're natural members of Parliament," said the young girl.
>
> "I don't like the sound of that either."
>
> "Doesn't your father sit in the House of Lords?" Bessie Alden went on.
>
> "Very seldom," said Lord Lambeth.
>
> "Is it a very august position?" she asked.
>
> "Oh dear no," said Lord Lambeth.
>
> "I should think it would be very grand," she serenely kept it up as the American female, he judged, would always keep anything up, "to possess simply by an accident of birth the right to make laws for a great nation."
>
> "Ah, but one doesn't make laws. There's a lot of humbug about it." (XIV, p. 325)

[15]In the New York Edition the second sentence is changed to "'She is the only girl I have ever seen,' Lord Lambeth explained, 'who hasn't seemed to me dying to marry me'" (XIV, p. 377).

[16]In the New York Edition this passage is: "Her sister had a pause, but in a few moments claimed the possession of an excellent theory. 'They just came to look at me!' she brought out as with much ingenuity" (XIV, p. 387).

[17]In the New York Edition the words "strange and charming" (XIV, p. 389) are inserted after "Bessie Alden."

[18]Randall, p. 570.

[19]James, "Daisy Miller," in The Complete Tales of Henry James, IV, p. 147. Further references given in body. "Daisy Miller" was included in the New York Edition. This passage in the revised Edition is: "It wasn't however what would have been called a 'bold' fron that she presented, for her expression was as decently limpid as the very cleanest water" (XVIII, p. 11).

[20]The revision is: "Poor Winterbourne was amused and perplexed --above all he was charmed" (XVIII, p. 18).

[21]The revision is:

> He had never yet heard a young girl express herself in just this fashion; never at least save in cases where to say such things was to have at the same time some rather complicated consciousness about them. And yet was he to accuse Miss Daisy Miller of an actual or a potential arrière-pensée, as they said in Geneva? He felt he had lived at Geneva so long as to have got morally muddled; he had lost the right sense for the young American tone. (XVIII, p. 11)

[22]The revision says "most charming innocent prattle" (XVIII, p. 40).

[23]The revision is:

> "She doesn't want to know me!" she then lightly broke out. "Why don't you say so? You needn't be afraid. I'm not afraid!" And she quite crowed for the fun of it.
> Winterbourne distinguished however a wee false note in this; he was touched, shocked, mortified by it. (XVIII, p. 29)

[24]The revision is:

> Winterbourne wondered if she were seriously wounded and for a moment almost wished her sense of injury might be such as to make it becoming in him to reassure and comfort her. He had a pleasant sense that she would be all accessible to a respectful tenderness at that moment. (XVIII, p. 29)

[25]The revision is:

> Winterbourne felt himself pulled up in the final horror now--and, it must be added with final relief. It was as if a sudden

clearance had taken place in the ambiguity of the poor girl's appearances and the whole riddle of her contradictions had grown easy to read. She was a young lady about the shades of whose perversity a foolish puzzled gentleman need no longer trouble his head or his heart. . . . He felt angry at all his shiftings of view--he felt ashamed of all his tender little scruples and all his witless little mercies. (XVIII, p. 86)

[26]Howells, P. 176.

[27]Dunbar, pp. 211-12.

[28]The revision is:

"Did you believe I was engaged the other day?"

"It doesn't matter now what I believed the other day!" he replied with infinite point.

It was a wonder how she didn't wince for it. "Well what do you believe now?"

"I believe it makes very little difference whether you're engaged or not!"

He felt her lighted eyes fairly penetrate the thick gloom of the faulted passage--as if to seek some access to him she hadn't yet compassed. (XVIII, p. 88)

[29]The revision is:

"She was the most beautiful lady I ever saw, and the most amiable." To which he added in a moment: "Also--naturally!--the most innocent."

Winterbourne sounded him with hard dry eyes, but presently repeated his words, "The most innocent?"

"The most innocent!"

It came somehow so much too late that our friend could only glare at its coming at all. (XVIII, p. 92)

[30]Wasserstrom, p. 63.

[31]Peter Buitenhuis, "From Daisy Miller to Julia Bride," p. 146.

[32]Howells, p. 171.

[33]Wasserstrom, p. 62.

[34]Randall, p. 575.

[35]The revision is: "that most noiseless and light-handed of nurses" (XVIII, p. 90).

[36]Kraft, p. 91.

[37]Randall, p. 575.

Chapter Two

[1]James, The Portrait of a Lady, ed. Robert D. Bamberg, p. 493.

[2]See F. O. Matthiessen, "The Painter's Sponge and the Varnish Bottle: Henry James's Revision of The Portrait of a Lady," rpt. in The Portrait of a Lady, ed. Robert D. Bamberg, pp. 577-97 and R. P. Blackmur, ed., The Art of the Novel (New York: Scribner's, 1962), p. XXVI.

[3]Anthony J. Mazzella, p. 619.

[4]Nina Baym, 199-200.

[5]James, Preface to Roderick Hudson in The Art of the Novel, ed. R. P. Blackmur, pp. 10-11.

[6]James, Preface to The Golden Bowl in The Art of the Novel, ed. R. P. Blackmur, pp. 337-8.

[7]James, Preface to The Golden Bowl, p. 339.

[8]James, Preface to The Golden Bowl, pp. 339-40.

[9]James, The Portrait of a Lady, ed. Robert D. Bamberg, p. 41. Further references given in body. The text of 1881 reads "a parcel of fools" instead of "aesthetic vulgarians."

[10]The 1881 text reads "take from her" instead of "deprive her of."

[11]McMaster, p. 57.

[12]The 1881 text reads:

> Our heroine had always passed for a person of resources and had taken a certain pride in being one; but she envied the talents, the accomplishments, the aptitudes of Madame Merle. She found herself desiring to emulate them and in this and other ways Madame Merle presented herself as a model.

[13]The 1881 text reads "repeated, softly" instead of "softly repeated."

[14]The 1881 text reads ". . . it struck Isabel almost as a dramatic entertainment, rehearsed in advance."

[15]The 1881 text reads "her independence" instead of "that state."

[16]The 1881 text reads "an expenditure of imagination" instead of "a ruinous expenditure."

[17]The 1881 text reads "that she" instead of "she."

[18]The 1881 text reads "excuse" instead of "pardon."

[19]The 1881 text reads "he lived" instead of "he rather invidiously lived" and "it murmured" instead of "murmured."

[20]The 1881 text reads "place as I, I" instead of "place I," "that. I" instead of "that--I," "'I?' he asked, 'What,'" instead of "I? What" and "poor; I am of a serious disposition" intead of "poor and of a serious disposition."

[21]Chase, p. 131.

[22]Matthiessen, p. 185.

[23]Cargill, p. 88.

[24]Tanner, "The Fearful Self," pp. 206-7.

[25]Wegelin, p. 58.

[26]The 1881 text reads "and to do was sweet" instead of "and to do could only be sweet."

[27]The 1881 text reads "keeping up those illusions" instead of "keeping them up."

[28]The 1881 text reads "Money is a great advantage" instead of "Money is a horrid thing to follow but a charmed thing to meet," "proved that I can get on without it" instead of "proved the limits of my itch for it" and "than most people" instead of "than most of the people one sees grubbing and grabbing."

[29]The 1881 text reads "mind" instead of "soul" and "which gathered" instead of "that might gather."

[30]The 1881 text reads "was able" instead of "should be able," "She" instead of "She could surrender to him with a kind of humility, she" and "but giving" instead of "she was giving."

[31]The 1881 text reads: "Pansy had already become a little daughter."

[32]The 1881 text reads "interested" instead of "had interested," "loved him" instead of "had loved him, she had so anxiously and yet so ardently given herself," "brought him" instead of "brought him and what might enrich the gift," "wouldn't" instead of "would never," "conscience" instead of "conscience, to some more prepared receptacle" and "who had the best taste" instead of "with the best taste."

[33]The 1881 text reads "be" instead of "me," "your liberty" instead of "your own ways" and "it" instead of "them."

[34]The 1881 text reads "a cluster" instead of "some cluster" and "clothes, the books one reads" instead of "one's furniture, one's garments, the books one reads."

[35]The 1881 text reads "not an inch less a man than he was" instead of "no ounce less of his manhood," "grim" instead of "set," "adaptability to some of the occasions of life" instead of "consonance with the deeper rhythms of life," "regarded with disfavor" to "viewed with reserve" and "they all seemed to be made of the same piece; the pattern, the cut was in every case identical" instead of "they all seemed of the same piece; the figure, the stuff was so drearily usual."

[36]The 1881 text reads "having a charming surface doesn't necessarily prove one superficial."

[37]In the 1881 text "Mrs. Osmond" is omitted.

[38]The 1881 text reads "is no substitute" instead of "was no conceivable substitute."

[39]James, The Notebooks of Henry James, p. 18.

[40]Tanner, "The Fearful Self: Henry James's The Portrait of a Lady," p. 213.

[41]Falk, p. IX.

[42]The 1881 text reads "nothing shocking" instead of "nothing to shock," "position" instead of "positions," "Gilbert Osmond" instead of "her husband" and "Madame Merle" instead of "their visitor."

[43]James, The Portrait of a Lady, p. 99.

[44]See Oscar Cargill, The Novels of Henry James, p. 83 and Arnold Kettle, "Henry James, The Portrait of a Lady" in An Introduction to the English Novel, pp. 13-34.

[45]F. O. Matthiessen, p. 185.

[46]Goldsmith, p. 112.

[47]Goldsmith, p. 111.

[48]Mull, p. 131.

[49]Mull, p. 132.

[50]Krook, p. 360.

[51]Tanner, p. 219.

Chapter Three

[1]Henry James, The Wings of the Dove in The Novels and Tales of Henry James, I, 120-121. Further references given in text.

[2]Bersani, p. 138.

[3]Kimball, "The Abyss and The Wings of the Dove," p. 300.

[4]Koch, p. 100.

[5]Krook, p. 203.

[6]Bell, "The Dream of Being Possessed and Possessing," p. 110.

[7]James, The Bostonians, p. 143.

[8]Snow, "The Disconcerting Poetry of Mary Temple: A Comparison of the Imagery of The Portrait of a Lady and The Wings of the Dove," p. 330.

[9]Rowe, p. 151.

[10]J. A. Ward, "Social Disintegration in The Wings of the Dove," p. 195.

Chapter Four

[1]Bewley's article, "Appearance and Reality in Henry James," Scrutiny, 17 (Summer, 1950), pp. 90-114 discusses the relationship between The Golden Bowl and the tales "A Path of Duty" and "The Liar."

[2]James, The Golden Bowl in The Novels and Tales of Henry James, I, p. 12. Further references given in text.

[3]Spencer, p. 333.

[4]Spencer, p. 337.

[5]Spencer, p. 334.

[6]Ward, The Search for Form: Studies in the Structure of James's Fiction, p. 210.

[7]Ward, p. 210.

[8]Wright, p. 61.

[9]Wright, p. 61.

[10]Wright, p. 63.

[11]Wallace, pp. 158-9.

[12]Wallace, p. 139.

[13]Wallace, pp. 139-40.

[14]Wallace, p. 139.

[15]Schneider, The Crystal Cage: Adventures of the Imagination in the Fiction of Henry James, p. 168.

[16]Schneider, p. 167.

[17]Lee, p. 106.

[18]Wright, p. 60.

[19]Cox, p. 193.

[20]Wasserstrom, p. 128.

[21]Wasserstrom, p. 98.

[22]Mogen, p. 23.

[23]Bleich, p. 235.

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